

WAR HAWK



BY CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG

NOVELS AT TWO SHILLINGS.

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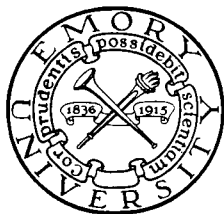
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THE
WARHAWK

BY
CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG

AUTHOR OF "THE MEDORA," "THE YOUNG COMMANDER," "THE TWO-
MIDSHIPMAN," ETC. ETC.



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THE WARHAWK.



CHAPTER I.

TOWARDS the close of the seventeenth century, on a day anything but remarkable either for its beauty or its mildness, two horsemen were spurring along the then very indifferent road that skirted the banks of the noble Suir, from Carrick to Waterford. It was the month of November; the days were short, and the two horsemen seemed by their speed inclined to make the most of the daylight. On reaching the summit of the steep hill, about three miles from the town of Waterford, they paused for a moment to breathe their panting steeds, and when about a dozen of well-armed attendants, who were far behind, came in view.

The two horsemen, having checked their steeds, gazed on the scene before them for a few minutes in silence. The elder of the two was a man well advanced in years, though still hale and vigorous; but the thoughts then struggling in his breast gave to his otherwise very noble features a stern and harsh expression. He wore a military undress; and on his head a broad beaver, with a single drooping feather. He was well armed; and the

huge holsters on his strong roan charger carried a pair of the heavy, clumsy, horse pistols of that period.

The other rider, a tall, handsome man of some six-and-twenty years, was habited as a country gentleman, in a kind of hunting suit of dark green. Excepting the very light sword carried by all gentlemen at that time, he was without weapons of defence on person or horse. The animal he rode was a splendid hunter.

"I fear, my dear father," said the young man, turning after the pause of a few moments towards his elder companion, who had taken off his beaver to cool his heated brow—"I fear you are over-exerting yourself. Had we not better stop at this road-side hostel?" added he, pointing to one near at hand, for the hill-top had a small village scattered over its summit at that period—"We have now ridden six hours without halting; and indeed, indeed, I feel this pursuit is a vain one."

"We must on, Hugh," exclaimed the father, almost fiercely. "I have sworn to hunt down this miscreant, or learn that he has escaped my vengeance, by ceasing to live. Let us on, then. Waterford is before us; beyond that they cannot have got as yet."

So saying, with a frown on his brow, the stern old man replaced his hat, gathered up his reins, and urged his horse down the hill, followed by his son and the domestics, who had then come up to them.

The young man's handsome features wore a sad and troubled expression as he rode on by the side of his sire. In less than an hour they entered the town, and proceeded at once to the best inn the place afforded. The present noble quay was not then built, and the town itself was only a straggling collection of narrow streets and mean houses. Still the river and its banks presented a bustling and pleasing appearance, from the number of vessels that lay at anchor loading and unloading.

Sir Vrance Granville, for that was the name and title of the elder gentleman, immediately on alighting, commenced inquiries after the object of his pursuit, des-

patching his domestics to search every house and part of the town. An hour had scarcely elapsed before his confidential servant returned with the intelligence that a lady and gentleman, with two attendants, had embarked only three hours before they entered the town, in a small sloop, called *The Mary of Dunmore*—that the tide then serving, she had immediately got under weigh, and dropped down the river, being hired to convey her passengers to Milford Haven in South Wales.

With a look of intense mortification, Sir Vrance Granville prepared to follow on the track of the fugitives. A skipper of a fast cutter was quickly engaged to start at once for Milford; and, in less than an hour, the Baronet and his son were sailing down the Suir in pursuit of the *Mary*.

Hugh Granville made no remark, but followed his father with a secret resolution to save his sister from the Baronet's rage if he could.

A few words with respect to the fugitives and their pursuers, at this part of our narrative, is all that is necessary.

Sir Vrance Granville was a baronet of English extraction, whose Irish estates were gained by conquest in the time of Elizabeth. These estates, situated in the south of Ireland, near Glandore, were called *Castle Granville*, a property adjoining *Glandore Abbey*, the noble domain of the *Fitzmaurices*. The Baronet was a kind and generous landlord, but, by nature, proud, and, at times, imperious in his manner and tone to those who thwarted his will. His youngest daughter, some few months before the imprudent elopement of her elder sister with an adventurer, who passed himself off in society as an Irish gentleman, in the Spanish service, had married the possessor of *Glandore Abbey*, Mr. *Gerald Fitzmaurice*.

Hugh Granville, the Baronet's only son, was of a widely different nature and disposition from his sire. Shocked at his elder sister's imprudent and unfortunate elopement from a gentleman's mansion in the vicinity of Cork,

where she was staying on a visit, he joined his father in the pursuit of the fugitives, not with the intention of inflicting punishment on the husband of his sister, but to shield her from her father's resentment should they succeed in overtaking them.

The weather, as the cutter sailed down the river with the Baronet and his son, and four of their attendants, gave evident tokens of its intention of blowing hard in the night—it fact, it became so rough, on opening the Bay of Dunmore, that the skipper hinted that it would be better to remain at anchor under Dunmore Head for the night; but the Baronet sternly said—that if The Mary could keep the sea, so could they, especially as the sloop the fugitives sailed in was said to be a very indifferent sea-boat.

On rounding the Hook point, which did not then boast of a light-house, the cutter began to feel the full force of the gale—for a gale it soon proved itself to be—and drew more to the eastward, sending a cross breaking sea against the cutter's bows. After struggling for four hours against the rapidly increasing storm, the cutter was fairly forced to turn her stern to it, and scud back and seek shelter in the Cove of Dunmore.

The Baronet and his son remained aboard; the former greatly excited and exasperated.

The following morning, a dismayed fishing craft came into the Cove from the eastward, and anchored alongside the cutter. The Baronet was on deck, and heard the two skippers conversing about the storm, when the captain of the fishing craft said, that a sloop was lost in the gale on the Saltee's rocks, and that they knew it was The Mary of Dunmore.

"What name did you say, my man?" inquired Sir Vrance Granville, with a start and a look of great excitement.

"The sloop Mary of this Cove, your honour," replied the skipper.

A stern smile passed over the features of the Baronet,

as he heard the words of the sailor, while his son's cheek blanched as he murmured—

“Good, God! Can this intelligence be true? My poor, poor sister! This is paying dearly for a moment of error.”

“Better perish thus,” said the Baronet, “than live dishonoured, the wife of a low-born, vicious adventurer—a noted gambler, and a notorious profligate.”

Then turning to the man who had come aboard the cutter in his small boat, by the direction of the other skipper, he demanded of him how he came to know the name of the vessel lost on the Saltee's.

“We passed her, your honour, just a few minutes after she struck. It was broad day; she was on a reef off the great Saltee's, and there was a fearful sea on. We were mastless; and while driving quite close past her under her mizen, we heard their wild cries for assistance; but we had no power to help—for our punt would only hold two in fine weather, even had she been manageable. We knew the wreck to be The Mary right well. We could see two females aboard; but they were swept into the sea in a very few seconds, and perished instantly.”

Hugh Granville buried his face in his hands. Even the old baronet was moved, and looked pale and agitated, as, turning to his own skipper, he said—

“The wind is veering to the North, and lulling. 'Tis only sixteen or eighteen miles to the Saltee's; get under weigh. Hugh,” he added, turning to his son, “see if you can recover the body of your sister; I shall return to Castle Granville.”

Accordingly, the baronet landed with two of his domestics, and procuring horses, rode back to Waterford, a distance of only nine miles. In half-an-hour after, the cutter was under weigh for the Saltee's. Though the wind then drew off the land—the sea was still troubled, and a heavy swell rolled in on that rocky coast.

In less than three hours, they reached the Saltee's, and landed, in their boat—thinking some of the bodies might be washed in from the reef. The stern of the sloop was

there; and, plain enough to be seen, was the word "Mary"—in large white letters—and underneath, of Dunmore. Some spars and fragments of rope were to be seen, but no human body was found, after many hours search. The wild tides that run round these islands, had doubtless carried them seaward or left them in its bed to decay.

Dejected and pained to the heart, Hugh Granville gave up his gloomy search and returned to Waterford, and thence to Castle Granville.

Though an only son, and heir to large estates, Hugh Granville had, according to the fashion of the times, entered the army, and became extremely attached to the profession of arms. And though his father made some objections, yet shortly after his unfortunate sister's miserable fate, he rejoined his regiment and accompanied it to India. There was another reason, confined entirely to Hugh Granville's own breast, that induced him to quit his native land for a time: he had, two or three years before the opening of this tale, become attached to a very amiable and beautiful girl, but of humble extraction; which, coming to the knowledge of his haughty sire, caused a coldness and reserve in his manner that vexed the affectionate and kind heart of his son. Knowing that it would lead to a final separation with his father if he followed his inclination, and united himself with the fair object of his passion, he sacrificed his happiness to filial duty, and sailed for India.

At this period, Ireland was greatly disturbed and distracted by conflicting opinions, and parties opposed each to the other. As this tale, however, has nothing whatever to do with Irish history after these few introductory pages, we will pursue this part of our narrative as briefly as possible. It was a period of frightful crime and outrage; and the landing of King James the Second in Ireland put a finishing stroke to the miseries that unhappy country was enduring. Even so late as the last quarter of the seventeenth century, there existed in

remote parts of the kingdom descendants of the old Irish Princes, living in retirement, and still retaining, as far as lay in their power, a species of feudal state, and a dismal display of pomp in their then limited territories.

These proud, ill-treated, and impoverished chieftains, with their followers, took up arms for King James, determined to oppose the claims of William of Orange to the last extremity. Taking advantage of the troubled state of the kingdom, formidable bands of desperadoes—worse far than mere plunderers—rose into existence, committing fearful excesses, under the pretext of supporting the cause of the ungrateful James.

Glandore Abbey, the magnificent residence of the Fitzmaurice family, was then in possession of Gerald Fitzmaurice, who was united to the youngest daughter of Sir Vrance Granville, notwithstanding his difference of creed and political opinions.

On the landing of King James, Fitzmaurice was one of the very first who took up arms in the cause of the king, to whom he had sworn allegiance; and leaving his wife and only child (a boy then nearly four years old), he proceeded to join the king, with a body of men raised and equipped at his own expense.

Sir Vrance Granville heard of his son-in-law's proceedings with a kind of apathy, into which he had fallen, two or three years after his son's departure for India. Being himself a Protestant, he would, probably—had his health and age permitted—have supported William; but he remained in tranquil retirement at Castle Granville, with Mrs. Fitzmaurice and her child, the disturbed state of the country having induced her to leave Glandore Abbey, and remain under her father's protection till the struggle between the two kings was brought to a termination.

While Fitzmaurice was in Cork, equipping and arming his regiment, he received a letter from Tyrconnel, requesting him to ascertain if there was any truth in the information conveyed to him that Sir Vrance Granville was

arming his retainers, and using his great influence for the purpose of opposing the cause of King William.

Fitzmaurice knew this intelligence to be utterly without foundation, and stated as much in his answer to Tyrconnel.

Rumours were rife through the length and breath of the land, of mansions pillaged, families murdered, and villages sacked by bands of plunderers, under various designations. Fitzmaurice therefore rejoiced that his wife and child were in Castle Granville, which was a strong castellated mansion, and well provided against the attack of any strong band of insurgents.

Thus passed several weeks; when, his regiment being ready to march, he felt anxious to see his wife and child, before he finally left the south. Accordingly, early in the morning, with four attendants well mounted and armed, he left Cork, and took the road to Castle Granville.

It was a cold, dark, stormy winter's day; and Fitzmaurice proceeded at a rapid pace, the first four or five leagues of the road, when his attention was caught by the appearance of a horseman coming towards him, spurring his horse at what seemed a mad speed. As they rapidly approached each other, he recognized him at once as his foster-brother, O'Regan, a man most devotedly attached to him, and who was charged to watch over his wife and child at his express desire. A feeling of misfortune, an instantaneous depression came over his mind, as he recognized his faithful follower approaching at so headlong a speed. O'Regan, with difficulty, checked his horse by the side of his master; he drew his breath with difficulty, as Fitzmaurice, in a tone of excitement, demanded the reason of such a desperate pace. But O'Regan could scarcely sit his horse, and then he saw, with a glance of dismay, that his follower's garments were deeply dyed in blood.

"Castle Granville has been attacked, plundered, and Sir Vrance Granville murdered!" burst from O'Regan,

as, completely exhausted, he dropped from his horse—without power to finish the sentence.

The fearful intelligence had scarcely escaped the lips of his foster-brother, ere Fitzmaurice, maddened with fear and excitement for his wife and child, had plunged the spurs into his horse, while the blood forsook his cheek and temples. The startled animal flew over the road—leaving the attendants far behind; and Fitzmaurice, wild and terror-stricken, never slackened his speed till the high-mettled charger fell totally exhausted before the wide-extended portals of Castle Granville.

CHAPTER II.

THE unfortunate Fitzmaurice rose from the ground, the chill of death creeping over his heart. The shades of night had fallen, and all was profoundly still. No living soul met his anxious glance, as he rushed across the wide court-yard.

With a shudder, he beheld several dead bodies lying stark and stiff, and grim in the fading light. He entered the noble hall, of which the doors had been torn from their hinges. The dead were here also; he then ran up the wide stairs, along a well-known corridor, while the echoes of his voice, as he shouted aloud, seemed to mock him. Then came upon his ear lamentations, and the plaintive cry of mourners' tones, so peculiar to Ireland.

Rushing into the chamber from whence came the sounds, the distracted man was soon by the side of the couch, on which lay the lifeless remains of his wife. With a shriek of agony, the widower and father, at the same moment, fell senseless with extended arms beside her he so fondly loved.

Fever and delirium followed the awakening from that fearful moment of agony. Days followed days, during which time O'Regan, who had partly recovered from his wound, watched, with devoted zeal, the master he loved so well. When reason resumed its place, Fitzmaurice rose from his bed, a wreck of former days. His father-in-law murdered, his wife dead, his eldest son either stolen or no longer living—all that was left him was the little infant boy, born amidst so much misery.

When Fitzmaurice was able, he demanded of O'Regan a recital of the past. He kissed the infant placed in his arms; and, from that moment, seemed to revive to a sense of what was due to the memory of her so cruelly lost.

"Alas, sir!" said O'Regan, "I can tell you but little, nor can anybody else; for the whole affair is involved in obscurity; I have thought of nothing else for weeks back, but am still in the dark. You see, sir, some days before this terrible outrage took place, a report reached us that a notorious freebooter, who sometimes went by the name of Fenwick, and at others of O'Rourke, had been seen with his gang in the vicinity of Miros's Wood. Thinking the robber might have it in his eye to plunder Glandore Abbey, Sir Vrance Granville—the Lord have mercy on his soul!" continued O'Regan, crossing himself, for he was a devout and sincere Catholic—"Sir Vrance told me in the morning to take a dozen of armed men with me, and ride over to the Abbey and see that the men your honour left in charge of the place were on the alert. The plate and other valuables I knew were safe, before your honour's departure; still the Abbey had attractions enough for a rascally rapparee like this Fenwick. So I started early for the Abbey; but I found the little garrison all alive, and on the look-out. The windows were barred, the great gates secured, and a day and night watch kept. It was thought Fenwick's band had quitted the neighbourhood, and gone on towards Castle Townsend. Towards evening I set out on my return, satisfied that all was right at the Abbey.

"I reached the Castle before night, saw Sir Vrance, and reported all right. At the usual hour all had retired to rest; I was weary after a hard day's ride, and I suppose slept sound; my chamber is in the left wing of the building, and at some distance from the principal apartments. I was suddenly startled out of my sleep by a fearful crash; and as I sprang out of bed, and rubbed my eyes, a shout of many voices rang through the building, instantly followed by several musket and pistol shots.

"Half frantic with fear and rage, I groped for my pistols and cutlass, and half dressed, rushed out through the passages. A scene of frightful confusion met my sight as I gained the entrance into the great hall. The whole space and the great stairs were covered with numbers of armed men, in the uniform of William of Orange's soldiers, some of whom carried torches. Shouts, oaths, and repeated shots pealed through the mansion. I caught sight of the brave old baronet, half dressed, with several of the household retainers, making good the first landing-place on the great staircase, against a host of furious assailants. I made a frantic rush through the crowd, shooting a ruffian who had a musket levelled at the old baronet. The next moment I received a shot in the side, and while I staggered forward, a blow from the butt of a musketoon stretched me senseless on the pavement.

"When I recovered my recollection, the work of death and villany was done; for I caught a glimpse of the plunderers leaving the Hall. I made an effort and got up, and though weak and faint, I contrived to follow the band, keeping out of sight. Not a word was spoken; they made for the banks of the creek. I counted full sixty men, and dared not venture too near, for the night had cleared considerably. There were too very large boats, into which they got; but I did not see that they carried any plunder with them. They pulled rapidly out of sight, and then I staggered back to the Castle and got to the great alarm-bell, which had not been heard the whole time of the attack. But I soon perceived that the

rope had been cut away inside the building. I got at the rope outside, and pulled it with all my strength; in a short time numbers of the terrified and half-dressed peasants came in from the hamlets, and with them several of the fishermen from Glandore. These returned and, by my directions, got their boats out and followed on the traces of the murderers.

"From the female domestics I learned that my mistress, 'alas! went from one fainting fit to another, and that Master Cuthbert and his nurse were both gone, and the noble baronet murdered, besides several of the domestics. At early dawn I had a horse saddled, and though scarcely able to sit on his back, I urged him at the top of his speed towards Cork, when I met your honour on the road."

For several minutes Fitzmaurice remained with his face buried in his hands; O'Regan could see his master was suffering intensely; but, though the kind-hearted foster-brother felt deeply for his master's sufferings, yet it was better, he thought, for him to give vent to his grief than muse upon his sorrows within his own breast.

After a time Fitzmaurice raised his head; he looked very pale and worn, but spoke calmly and in a tone of resignation, saying:

"And after my return, and during my illness, what took place?"

"Why, sir," sighed O'Regan, "when the dismal tidings reached Cork, Major O'Dowell came down here with fifty soldiers of your honour's regiment; and seeing that you were in a state of delirium, he did everything man could do to trace the murderers and ruffians, for the major felt convinced, though they wore the uniform of William III., they did not belong to any regiment then in the kingdom. But no trace or clue was discovered on the land. The fishermen who pursued them down the river, gained sight of a large, heavy vessel under weigh, standing out from the shore, and aboard which the villains must have got. With the strong wind blowing, the vessel cleared

the island off the mouth of Glandore harbour, and was soon out of sight. Mr. Briefless, the baronet's lawyer and great friend, came down here in a state of great excitement, lamenting bitterly the miserable fate of his kind patron. In fact, all the county gentry in the neighbourhood evinced the greatest anxiety and activity in endeavouring to hunt out the perpetrators of this daring outrage. The disappearance of Brady Sullivan, the nurse, and Master Cuthbert, astonished every one; and everything that ought to be done," added O'Regan, with tears in his eyes, "for the mistress, blessed be her memory! *was* done."

Fitzmaurice motioned for O'Regan to cease, and leave him; still, for a time, he gave way to grief, but gradually roused himself into action. A highly respectable matron was engaged to take care of the infant Gerald. O'Regan's wife became his nurse; and shortly after Fitzmaurice himself, having offered immense rewards for the discovery of his lost son, or any clue to the murderers of Sir Vrance Granville, proceeded with his regiment to Dublin. He anxiously plunged amid the scenes then acting, hoping to escape in a measure from bitter and heart-rending recollections.

Notwithstanding the great rewards offered, neither the murderers of the baronet nor the abductors of the young Fitzmaurice were discovered.

In the then disturbed state of the kingdom, even such an outrage as the sacking of Castle Granville passed through men's minds as a dream. No leader of that period, on the side of the weak and ungrateful James II., gained a more famed name for courage and skill than the unfortunate Gerald Fitzmaurice; under the French general, St. Ruth, he received a distinguished command—afterwards forming with his regiment part of the garrison of Ballymore, next in command to Colonel Bourke, who gallantly held the place with a thousand men. He was mortally wounded in the furious assault made upon that town by General Ginckel.

Thus fell and died the handsome and gallant Gerald Fitzmaurice, in his twenty-sixth year. The remnant of his regiment—mostly his own retainers and tenants—contrived to carry with them to Glandore Abbey the remains of their beloved chief. But the misfortunes of the house of Fitzmaurice did not cease with the death of its possessor; for his lands, abbey, and tenements were some time after confiscated, and fell to the Crown.

It was not till three years subsequent to the treaty of Limerick, which gave a kind of peace to unfortunate Ireland, that the son of the murdered baronet, Sir Hugh Granville, returned to his native land. Communication at that period with our possessions in India being slow and insecure, the intelligence and account of the terrible misfortunes of his family and connexions did not reach Sir Hugh till a long period had elapsed from their occurrence. Shocked, distressed, and burning with anxiety to reach Ireland, he hurried his affairs in order to return as quickly as possible.

Sir Hugh Granville was at this period in his fortieth year. During the passage of years spent in India, he had risen rapidly in rank. At the time of his father's death he was Governor of —, and was considered by the British Government an officer of high courage and abilities. In those few years he had amassed an ample fortune in the war with those fierce tribes, the Pindarries, a most extraordinary race of freebooters, who in after years almost overran the Continent of India. In taking several of their fortresses, he had gained immense booty. But, in his anxiety to return to England, he left his affairs in a very unsettled state, and, resigning his command, sailed for his native country.

On reaching Ireland he was greatly amazed, for although aware of the desolation that had come over his name and race, he was astounded on finding that the Granville estates had actually been confiscated and re-purchased by an officer of King William's army. That the possession of his brother-in-law, Fitzmaurice, should become

feited, was easily enough imagined, on account of his adherence to the cause of James ; but that the estates and property of his father, the late Sir Vrance Granville, should come under the hammer as confiscated property, appeared to him a flagrant breach of all law. Indignant at such injustice, he resolved to demand instant investigation of the affair.

Just at the period of Sir Hugh's return commenced the famous inquiry concerning the Irish forfeitures. Commissioners were appointed by Parliament to examine into the legality of these forfeitures ; though, in truth, these commissioners were delegated rather to expose the evil than from any great love of justice. Nevertheless, having consulted with his old friend and law-adviser, Mr. Briefless, Sir Hugh Granville laid his petition before the Earl of Drogheda and Sir Richard Living, both commissioners. With the earl he was intimately acquainted.

Before taking this step, Mr. Briefless had made every inquiry possible, and sought to discover the name of the pretender to the Castle Granville estates. All he could make out was, that there was an agent who called himself Adolphus Green, that this man actually took possession of Castle Granville, and an order was shown to the tenants, desiring them to pay their rents to Mr. Green. But Mr. Briefless was consulted by the old steward of the late baronet, and by his advice he, as well as the tenants, refused to acknowledge the order, without name of the real purchaser attached, seeing the deed of purchase, and also the act of forfeiture. Mr. Briefless declared it was all moonshine, defied the unknown purchaser, and gave notice to the agent, Mr. Green, to apply to him. But no Mr. Green came ; and thus matters stood, when Sir Hugh Granville returned from India.

That justice might be done to the purchaser and others, thirteen creditors were authorised to hear and determine all claims relative to forfeited property and estates. Somewhat to the surprise of Sir Hugh and his lawyer, on a strict investigation of the case, it appeared that no

forfeiture had ever been made of the Granville estates; neither grant nor gift from the Crown; and finally that Mr. Green and his employers were impostors; for no trace of them could be discovered.

Sir Hugh, therefore, amidst the rejoicings of his tenantry and retainers, returned and took up his abode in the Castle. All the Baronet, and his friend and lawyer, Mr. Briefless, could conjecture about this strange attempt to take possession of Castle Granville, was, that some adventurer, acquainted with the family history, had taken advantage of the times being so turbulent, and so little under the control of the law, forged documents to suit his purpose, intending to plunder all he could from the estate before the return of the rightful owner from India.

Sir Hugh's first and anxious wish was to see the establishment, under his own eye, of the young son of the unfortunate Fitzmaurice, left entirely dependent on him by the forfeited estates of the Fitzmaurices falling to the crown.

Accordingly, the young Gerald Fitzmaurice—a most promising and beautiful boy, the image of Sir Hugh's unfortunate sister—was sent for, and, with his attached attendant, Dennis O'Regan, comfortably established at Castle Granville.

From this period, we may say our story fairly commences—having as briefly as possible related the “history” of our hero's unfortunate parents.

CHAPTER III.

TIME passed happily and quietly in Castle Granville; Sir Hugh bestowed every care and attention upon his nephew, having formally adopted him. The youth's

unfortunate name of Fitzmaurice was dropped, that of Granville substituted, and Sir Hugh regarded Gerald as his future heir.

The country now began to enjoy a little repose, after the storms and tumults of the preceding years; many of the gentry returned to their homes; and Sir Hugh visited and invited several he formerly knew to his hospitable and then splendidly kept-up establishment of Castle Granville. One of the Baronet's first acts, on the return of tranquillity to the surrounding country, was to circulate through the towns and villages in the south of Ireland, offers of high rewards for any clue to the perpetrators of the outrage committed at Castle Granville, and also a large reward for any intelligence relating to the lost child of Fitzmaurice, and his nurse.

But twelve months passed over without these offers and tempting rewards meeting any attention; and finally Sir Hugh was about to abandon all thoughts of discovering any trace of the lost child, when one morning he was surprised by receiving a letter, containing the following lines—

“Honoured and respected Sir,

“Seeing a paper posted in the town of Skibbereen, offering a large reward for any intelligence relating to the villains as murdered your honour's father—rest his soul—Glory be—Faix, I began to wish I did know where to put my fist upon them, as the reward is very tempting; but I don't, your honour. But I do know something of the lost child and his nurse. How I comes to know it is neither here or there; but I know where to find them; and if your worship's honour will only agree to my terms, and they are easy enough—I will swear to show your honour where the child and the nurse is this blessed moment, alive and hearty—faix, and a fine boy he is—as like his father—his soul to glory—as two peas. For certain reasons best known to myself, all I ax is to be axed no questions; and that your honour

will pass your word neither to detain me or molest me; and that when I take you to where you will find your nephew—and your worship is satisfied he is in truth your nephew—that your honour will pay me on demand one hundred gold guineas.

“Waiting your honour’s answer to this, which please to direct—to Phelim O’Toole, Post Office, Skibbereen—

I remain, till death,

Your honour’s humble servant to command,

PHELIM O’TOOLE.”

Sir Hugh Granville read this curious epistle twice over, and then remained several moments in deep thought. At first he felt inclined to consider it an audacious attempt at imposition; and then the memory of past events came forcibly across his mind; and connecting one circumstance with another, he began firmly to believe there was an unknown and implacable enemy to the families of Granville and Fitzmaurice. The different commanders, serving with their regiments in the south of Ireland, distinctly and indignantly denied that any order was ever given for attacking Castle Granville; and though O’Regan was positive that the assailants wore the uniform of some regiment in King William’s army, yet he himself felt convinced they were not regular soldiers; and often said he considered them part of the band of the rapparee O’Rourke, *alias* Fenwick, both names, no doubt, fictitious ones. Yet, who this enemy could be, completely puzzled him; for he had never heard of any feud existing against the Granville family, or the Fitzmaurices, for centuries back.

The abduction of the elder child of the unfortunate Fitzmaurice had always been a matter of extreme surprise and conjecture. He could not, in his own mind, see any possible motive for it. The confiscation to the Crown of Glandore Abbey, and the large estates adjoining, left the orphans completely destitute. Had the boy,

been stolen for the hopes of a great reward being offered, that object would have been effected long since.

These and many other thoughts passed through the mind of Sir Hugh, till at length he resolved to write an answer to the curious letter he had before him ; but first of all he summoned Dennis O'Regan, whose attachment and devotion to the young Gerald had increased ten-fold, as he grew in years. Sir Hugh himself greatly admired the honest, straightforward character of O'Regan. At this time Dennis was in his thirty-fourth year, with a fine open countenance, and a frame and constitution of iron.

"Well Dennis," said Sir Hugh, as O'Regan entered the room, "here is something at last, in reference to my lost nephew."

O'Regan's eyes opened to the widest extent, while the baronet read aloud the letter he had received.

"Phelim O'Toole," he muttered, several times ; "never heard of him. Be gorra, your honour, it wouldn't be a bad plan to catch hold of this Phelim. Depend on it, he's one of the villains under a false name. If I had only a grip of him, what a squeeze I would give him ;" and he held out his hand, as if in the act of laying hold of the said Phelim O'Toole, large enough and muscular enough for a giant.

Sir Hugh smiled, saying—

"We must act, Dennis, with caution. If this fellow is an impostor, and I have scarcely any doubt but that such is the case—but, supposing, for instance, that he leads us to find this nephew of mine, lost so strangely and mysteriously, do you think you recollect that boy sufficiently to identify him ?"

"Faix, Sir Hugh, there's little fear of mistaking a Fitzmaurice or a Granville," replied O'Regan, "I am sure, your honour, I would know the poor boy in a moment."

"By-the-bye, I wished to ask you some particulars respecting this nurse, who disappeared at the same time with my nephew. Who was she? and what kind of character did she bear ?"

"Well, your honour," answered Dennis, rubbing the back of his head hard, according to his usual custom, when doubtful how to commence a speech, "as to who she was, that's easily told; but faix, as to character, it's not so soon made out. She is the daughter of Phadric Sullivan, your honour, and a smart handsome lass she was—light of heel, and, be gorra, for the matter of that, light of tongue, and that was not the worst of it."

"It surprises me then, Dennis," said Sir Hugh, "if such was her character, how she came to be selected as the nurse for the young heir of Fitzmaurice."

"Why, you see, sir, old Phadric Sullivan was a faithful and favourite retainer of my poor master and his daughter. Brady was, as I said, a very handsome tidy colleen. She married while staying in Cork with an aunt—some said an English soldier—others said he was no soldier—but an Irishman and no mistake, and a smuggler to boot.

"However, whatever the rascal was, and indeed there was no making out the truth of her story, he deserted her. Brady Sullivan, for she insisted on being called her own name, came back to her old father, with a little girl two months old. My poor mistress, glory be around her! just then gave birth to Cuthbert, and was taken so very ill that it was impossible for her to nurse her baby. Old Sullivan's daughter was on the moment thought of, and sent for to take charge of the child; and the boy took so to her, and she looked so neat, clean, and well-tempered, that when the mistress got better a month or two after, she seemed quite pleased she should remain and nurse the child, especially as Brady's own little girl was carried off with the measles; and thus, your honour, she remained till the night when the villains attacked the castle. Now whether she was carried off with the child, or went of her own accord, who can say? Be gorra, your honour, it's a mighty strange piece of business altogether; and this fellow calling himself Phelim O'Toole, from Skibbereen. I don't know any O'Toole in

that part of the country—there's none of that name in these lands ; he's sure, your worship, to be one of those villains."

"Still, Dennis," said the Baronet, after a moment's thought, "I think I will agree to that fellow's proposals. We can take care he does not deceive us about the boy."

Accordingly, Sir Hugh took pen and paper and wrote an answer to the said Phelim O'Toole, agreeing to his proposals, desiring him to beware how he tried to deceive him, and to name an early day to proceed on their intended expedition.

Two or three days after sending this letter to Phelim O'Toole, directed to the Post Office of Skibbereen, the Baronet received most important letters from India. After a careful perusal, and several hours' thought upon the subject contained in them, he came to the resolution of making a voyage to India, and settling his affairs there by converting his eastern possessions into money.

Determined to lose no time, he mounted his horse the following day, and attended only by O'Regan, proceeded to Cork, to consult with his old friend and law-adviser, Mr. Briefless. This gentleman was a lawyer of considerable eminence, and much esteemed by all persons with whom he was acquainted. He was a bachelor, some five-and-forty years of age, gave excellent dinners, and his house-keeper, Mrs. Silvertongue, was not only a remarkably genteel person in manner and dress, but a most buxom tempting dame withal ; and one who managed her master's house and kept his establishment in first-rate order—was famous for her dinners, and a great favourite with all the lawyer's guests. In person, Mr. Briefless was short, but in singularly good condition ; was considered to have a very good leg, which he was particular in showing to the best advantage, cased in a tight black silk stocking, the fashion of that day. His wig was matchless ; and his round, shining, high-coloured, good-humoured countenance was always carefully divested of every trace or symptom of beard.

Mr. Briefless received his friend and patron, Sir Hugh Granville, with sincere cordiality ; and Mrs. Silvertongue received orders to prepare a dinner in her best style—an order the good dame willingly obeyed, for Sir Hugh was a great favourite—and it's not all visitors are favourites with favourite housekeepers, especially bachelors' housekeepers.

Mr. Briefless with considerable surprise read the letter which the Baronet had received from his Skibbereen correspondent, Phelim O'Toole.

"Now this rascal, for there's no doubt about that term," said the lawyer after a few moments' consideration, "is evidently acquainted with the villains who committed the fearful outrage at Castle Granville, and is himself, perhaps, one of them. The whole affair is singularly mysterious. Suppose, Sir Hugh, you were to seize this fellow, and imprison him on suspicion—eh?"

"That would not do, my old friend," said Sir Hugh ; "I have promised in my letter to hold him scatheless, and I must keep my word, though, as you say, he may be one of the villains. Still I can have a strict watch kept upon him, and O'Regan is certain of recognising the fellow, if he ever beheld him before. Besides, he promises to lead us to a certain place, where we shall find not only my nephew, but the nurse Brady Sullivan. Now, my good friend, this woman must know something of the villains that carried her off, and who have detained her these last six or seven years in custody."

"Always provided, Sir Hugh," interrupted the lawyer, "that the said Brady Sullivan, whom O'Regan describes as rather a suspicious person, is not associated with one or other of the parties concerned in that vile outrage."

"I have thought of that myself," said the Baronet, thoughtfully ; "but we can say little on this subject till we test the truth of this Master O'Toole's proposal. If an impostor is attempted to be put forward, as Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, surely it will be easy to detect him ; for it is reasonable to suppose that some likeness will be trace-

able of the families he springs from. However, my dear friend, I came here on other business. I intend returning to India to make a final settlement of my affairs there. This voyage and business, if prosperous, and if it pleases Providence to spare me, will occupy at least a couple of years. I wish you to come to Castle Granville for a few days. I know you cannot spare much of your valuable time; but two or three days will do for me to make my will, and settle my worldly affairs in this country. I wish to find a tutor for Gerald—a gentleman on whom I can in every way depend. He shall have an ample salary; and, if possible, I should prefer a gentleman educated for the church.”

“I know the very person, Sir Hugh,” interrupted the lawyer, with much vivacity of manner, and looking anxiously in the face of Sir Hugh. Then, in a low tone, he added, “The gentleman I mean is Mr. Harmer.”

The Baronet started, looked down for a moment with a sad and thoughtful expression of countenance, saying—

“Mr. Harmer! the husband of poor Helen Ramsey? Yes—he is a gentleman in every respect—pious, kind, and benevolent—”

“And poor,” added the lawyer.

“Has he any family, my kind friend?” inquired Sir Hugh, after a pause.

“None,” returned Mr. Briefless. “His little girl died shortly after I wrote to you at Calcutta, mentioning her poor mother’s fate; I little thought the dear child would so soon follow, and your generous intentions be frustrated.”

“I will write to Mr. Harmer,” said the Baronet, “and request him to visit me on my return from this expedition, which, I trust, will not turn out a bootless one.”

The next day Sir Hugh returned to Castle Granville, and two days after received a letter in reply to his, from Skibbereen. It was from Phelim O’Toole, and contained the following lines:—

“Honoured Sir,

“I received your honour’s letter, and write to say, that I will be ready to conduct your worship to the place where you will find your nephew and the nurse who had the care of him when an infant. On Thursday next I will be on the road between Castle Townsend and Skibbereen, waiting for your honour by the stone cross at Courtmakilty.

“Trusting faithfully to your honour’s word,

“I remain,

“Your humble servant to command,

“PHELM O’TOOLE.”

Sir Hugh instantly prepared to set out the following morning early, attended by O’Regan and four well armed domestics.

Crossing the narrow arm of the sea that divides Glendore from Castle Townsend, they continued along the then most indifferent bridle road that led from the hamlet of Castle Townsend to Skibbereen.

At the period of our tale there existed through the western parts of Ireland, but very little traffic or trade of any kind. The communication between town and town was very inconsiderable, the roads were wretched, the land miserably cultivated, and the houses of entertainment for man and beast few, and, in truth, far between. Smuggling and illicit distillation seemed the only trades or occupations that flourished along the entire of that wild coast, from the old bluff head of Kinsale, to the mouth of the Kenmare river. The houses of landed proprietors were scattered at wide distances from each other; and here and there, on wild and picturesque spots, might be seen those strange, grey old towers, rising in solitary grandeur and remaining to the present day—monuments to puzzle our minds with conjectures as to what their original purpose was.

Sir Hugh was but little acquainted with the scenery

of his native land ; and he looked around him with surprise and regret, seeing no sign of agricultural labour for miles.

The road led along a wild and irregular coast, but possessing great natural beauties and many advantages. Innumerable islands lay scattered at various distances from the shore, forming harbours and shelter to coasters. Immense long inlets indented the land. Each creek, at the present day, has its busy and populous little town ; but then they were the resort only of millions of water-fowl, undisturbed except by the daring smuggler, who ran his little vessel within those creeks for safety from the stormy gales of the broad Atlantic.

The travellers were slowly approaching the gigantic stone cross of Courtmakilty, and Sir Hugh was looking anxiously round for the expected Phelim O'Toole, when O'Regan pointed out to the baronet an individual perched on a rock, sitting swinging his legs, and whistling a popular air with great composure.

"That must be our man, Sir Hugh," said O'Regan, eyeing the individual in question keenly ; "and a great, red-headed, ugly beast he is, if that's Mr. Phelim O'Toole."

Sir Hugh reined in his horse close beside the stranger, and then perceived on the other side of the rock a short, thickset pony, with long grey hair, twisting in every possible direction. Neither saddle nor bridle decorated his back or head ; but a strong, twisted hay rope was looped over its nose.

Sir Hugh looked at the man, who ceasing his whistling, said in a broad Irish accent—

"God save your honour !" touching his extremely dilapidated hat at the same time, but not offering to stir from the rock.

In doubt whether this was his man or not, the Baronet said—

"Perhaps, my man, you may be able to give me a little information."

"Musha, maybe, your honour, and it's welcome you'll be any time."

"Do you know any one called Phelim O'Toole in these parts?"

"Is it Phalim O'Toole, your honour?" repeated the man, jumping from the rock, and whistling, which brought the pony to his side in a moment. "And, may be," he added, taking off his hat, "your honour is from Castle Grauville. If so, sure I'm Phalim O'Toole, at your honour's sarvice."

And in a second he was seated on the back of the sturdy little beast beside him.

"Well, this *bates Banagher* altogether," muttered O'Regan, rubbing his head hard, which he always did when perplexed. "If it wasn't for his carrotty head, and the brogue the big brute has—I'd say, 'Mr. Phalim O'Toole, I've seen yez afore.' But I'll be after keeping a pair of eyes upon you."

"And now, your worship, I'm at your service," said Phelim.

"And pray, my man, where do you intend guiding us?" asked Sir Hugh.

"First to Bantry, your honour; and then, by hiring a small smack, we can reach Bear Island in three hours, or less."

"Bear Island!" echoed Sir Hugh, with considerable astonishment; "why it's an uninhabited tract of land in Bantry Bay."

"Faix, just the place your lordship; but as to uninhabited, by my *sowl* there's *plinty* of inhabitants. It's just the place in ould Ireland for tasting a drop of the creature in its pure state. It's wild, to be sure, now; but if your honor saw it in the times of the O'Connors—the great O'Connors of the West—when they kept the sporting tower on the Island. Och, my *sowl*, your honour, all the morning you might hear the cry of the hounds and the blast of the horns; and all night long the shouts of songs and revellers. But, ochone! those days are

gone, and so is the race of the once mighty O'Connors too. Come up, you devil's darling," he shouted to his pony, who tripped over a stone, "and don't be stopping now to make your devotions. There's Skibbereen, your honour, just a head of you. I suppose you'll give the beasts a feed, and then we may reach Bantry before night."

Whatever Sir Hugh thought of his guide he kept it to himself; but he certainly had a very poor opinion either of the man's honesty of purpose or his veracity.

O'Regan appeared as if plunged into a labyrinth of thought, though, every now and then, he made great efforts to get a full glance of Master Phelim O'Toole's features. This he could not conveniently get; for the man kept well in front, and his long, lank, red hair hung over his face, and even on his shoulders. Strange images of times and persons passed through O'Regan's mind. Still he could not fix the impression made at the moment upon any individual.

It was late that night when they entered the then miserable town of Bantry. The following morning, a light and fast-sailing boat was hired, and the whole party embarked for Bear Island.

This island, now a tolerably well cultivated tract of land, lies within a mile of the western side of the noble and magnificent bay of Bantry. Towards its southern end, it rises into mountainous elevation. The channel between the Island and the western shore, forms one of the finest harbours in the united kingdom. It is above nine miles in length, and no where exceeding a mile across. The access is easy, and of considerable depth of waters, and the distance from the town of Bantry is about eighteen miles.

The sail from Bantry to Bear Island, along a most picturesque coast, passing the entrance into Glengariff bay, with its hundred beautiful islands, wooded to the very edge of the limpid water, afforded Sir Hugh much pleasure. The views during the whole way were beautiful. The noble bay of Bantry without, capable of holding

the largest fleet in the world, was then as calm as a lake, the wind blowing gently from the north-west; the wild and singularly picturesque mountain forming its eastern shore, with Bantry at the foot of a hill, well clothed in wood, and protected from the swell of the ocean by Whiddy Island, and with the broad Atlantic to the south, altogether formed an unequalled panorama. To Sir Hugh, the three hours occupied in reaching Bear Island, were passed in pleased contemplation of the scenery.

Phelim O'Toole pointed out the spot to land. The boat was brought to an anchor, and the party went on shore. As they proceeded up the side of a steep and rocky hill, Sir Hugh called to his guide to come to him.

Phelim O'Toole was a big and powerful man—with stooping shoulders, whether natural or assumed, Sir Hugh could not say—he had a slovenly look and manner; appeared to be nearly forty years old, with strongly-marked features, and cunning and malicious dark eyes—which were quite in a contrast with his deep red hair and beardless face. He stood with his eyes bent on the ground, twirling his hat, and fidgeting with his great feet, as if bent upon destroying a piece of rock that lay under them.

“Listen to me, sir,” said the Baronet; “you have my word that neither myself or servants shall question or molest you. I will fulfil my part of the contract. But, hark ye,” and the baronet laid his hand on the silver-mounted butt of a pistol, which he carried in his belt, “if any treachery is intended, you will be the first victim—now, lead on.”

For an instant, Phelim boldly raised his head, to look Sir Hugh in the face. As he did so, the long, lank tresses of red hair fell, for a moment, off his face, and his countenance was more easily seen. When he raised his eyes, they encountered the fixed and anxious look of O'Regan, who was standing close behind the baronet, and a strange and malignant expression passed over his face; the next instant, dropping his eyes, and hastily pressing his hat on his head, he muttered—

"Never fear, your honour, 'honour bright, all the world over.' I'm as true to my word as a king," and he passed on before.

O'Regan drew a deep breath, and then whistled—a long and very meaning whistle it was. He then rubbed his head very hard; and, finally, muttered to himself, as he followed Sir Hugh—

"Glory be to the Saints! I think my senses is coming back. I heard Sir Hugh tell of those Indians scalping Christians. By my soul, I'll try and scalp you, Phelim O'Toole, or my name's not Dennis O'Regan. Och! wait a bit; if I don't change the colour of your hair, my darlint, you may *ait* me!"

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER gaining the summit of the hill, the party paused—for the ascent had its difficulties.

"There, your honour," said Phelim O'Toole, pointing to an abrupt, rocky mound, at about half a-mile distant, "there is the place where your nephew, young Master Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, is confined. That is O'Connor's Tower."

"O'Connor's Tower!" repeated the Baronet; "and pray how many inhabitants may it contain?"

"Faix, your honour, I know of none save the nurse and the child, and the keeper of the tower—old red-headed Rory; he may not be willing, your worship, to open the door to strangers; but it is very easy making him—or breaking it open ourselves."

They soon reached the tower, built on a very commanding eminence. The view, from its site, was of singular beauty, and of immense extent. Vast heaps of rubbish

and stones, to a considerable extent strewed round the tower, showed, that in former times, the building had been of some pretensions. The door, leading to the interior, was a strong oaken one, covered all over with knobs of iron, and crossed with bars of the same metal. No other entrance was visible, and the few windows were at a considerable height.

Phelim picked up a ponderous stone, and commenced a series of blows quite sufficient to stave in any ordinary door. After a few seconds, the head and shoulders of a man—the head covered with a much more abundant crop of red hair than our friend Phelim's—was thrust out from a loop-hole, some twenty feet above the door; and a voice, savage and discordant, demanded, in Irish—

“What the devil brought them there—and who were they?”

“Ho! ho!” muttered O'Regan, as he cast a glance up at the speaker; “another beauty with a carroty poll! Let us in, honest man,” added he, “keep a civil tongue in your head.”

“Duoul!” shouted the man; “I'll show you civility. Take yourself out of that, or take this,” and he thrust the muzzle of an enormous blunderbuss out of the loop-hole, drawing his head in at the same time.

This formidable weapon was anything but pleasant to look at—and Sir Hugh's domestics thought so also; for they at once sprang behind a broken wall, leaving their master and O'Regan exposed to its contents.

Without a moment's hesitation, O'Regan drew a pistol from his belt, and catching a slight glimpse of the man's head, fired.

With a yell of defiance and rage, the fellow drew the trigger of the blunderbuss; and a loud ringing report followed. But O'Regan had dragged the Baronet well under the wall. As to Phelim, he stood his ground quite coolly, and was untouched. With an oath, he lifted an immense mass of stone and hurled it at the door with such force as to burst the lock, and the door flew open.

"The big brute's no coward, at all events," muttered O'Regan, as he followed his master into the tower. The servants came on, looking anxiously round for fear of a second discharge of the same formidable weapon. A winding staircase presented itself; and up this the Baronet went, followed by O'Regan, neither noticing that Phelim O'Toole did not this time lead the way. The first landing place presented to their view, two solid doors, bolted outside with iron bars.

"Look out, Dennis, for that rascal with the blunderbuss," said the Baronet, as he drew back the bolts of one of the doors, attracted to it by a loud knocking within, and voices shouting to open the door.

Sir Hugh immediately threw the door open, and beheld a boy, and a woman holding him by the hand. The Baronet started back a step; for, short as was the glance he took of the boy's face, he was struck with his striking likeness to the Granville family.

As soon as the woman beheld Sir Hugh, she clasped her hands together and threw herself on her knees, uttering sundry ejaculations in her native tongue, while the boy stood boldly gazing from one to the other in wonder.

O'Regan, with his mouth open and his eyes distended, remained, leaning his hands upon his knees, gazing at the boy and the woman half stupified.

"Shure then, by the powers, that's Brady Sullivan herself, and no other," burst from O'Regan. A wild cry from the woman, and up she sprang; and, throwing her arms round the neck of the startled Dennis, she hugged him vehemently, exclaiming—

"Och hone, och hone! we are saved entirely. The dear child is found at last by his friends,"

"Many thanks to you, Brady Sullivan," said O'Regan, "for your caresses," taking her arms from around his neck, with no very pleased expression of countenance. "Faix, may be there's one here." and he looked around him; but his countenance changed as he beheld only the two servants of Sir Hugh.

"Where is that red-headed rascal, O'Toole?" he anxiously demanded.

"Never mind him now, Dennis," said the Baronet, "his part of the contract is finished. If I conjecture rightly you will see him no more."

"You know this woman," continued Sir Hugh, to O'Regan. "Who is she?"

"Who am I, your honour?" echoed the woman, turning quickly round and dropping a low curtsy. "I'm Brady Sullivan, Sir Hugh Granville, for such I suppose is your honour's name, judging by your likeness to my poor ill-treated boy here." Placing her apron to her eyes, and sobbing, she continued, while the Baronet kept his gaze upon the handsome, unabashed features of the boy. "The Virgin bepraised and glorified! I'm released after six years' imprisonment to this old tower and the land about it."

"There is no denying the great likeness," said Sir Hugh, as if communing with himself, and little heeding the good-looking Mrs. Brady Sullivan. "Come here, my good boy," added he, seating himself, "come to me."

The boy came frankly and willingly; and put his hand into that of Sir Hugh. Pushing back the curls from his forehead, the baronet gazed anxiously into his face. He was a handsome child—with dark curling hair, fair skin, and dark, expressive eyes; and for his years—not more than ten—bold and unabashed in manner and look.

"And so, they say, you are Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. Is it so, my dear boy?"

"Yes," replied the child, fearlessly, "I am Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. Who else could you take me to be? Nurse Sullivan always said I was Gerald Fitzmaurice's son; and she ought to know that nursed me."

"And, masha!" cried Mrs. Sullivan, clasping her hands, and facing Sir Hugh, "who is it but your own blood-nephew? As I have a soul to be saved," and she crossed herself, "and may my death be one of misery and pain, but I speak the blessed truth, Sir Hugh Granville. For six long years have I nursed him; and now, murder! to

see with the likeness strong on him, his own uncle disowns him."

"Arah, woman, be easy," interrupted Dennis. "How would you his honour should know a child he never saw?"

The Baronet waved his hand to silence O'Regan. Then, looking steadily into the face of Mrs. Brady Sullivan, he said calmly, in a kind tone—

"You mistake me, my good woman; so far from disowning this child, I have come a long distance to claim and restore him—should I become convinced of his identity—to the place to which his birth and my affection will entitle him."

"God bless your honour for those words! And it's proof and plenty you shall have. Sure, every stitch of his clothes, from the hour of his birth to the present, are all safe with me and under lock and key. And sure Father O'Mara will tell you all about it."

"And who is father O'Mara?" demanded Sir Hugh.

"The priest, your honour, who for the last three years came here three times a week, and taught my darling to write and read, glory be to the blessed saints who sent him to us in our troubles! He gave us all them books," pointing to several on the shelf, "and told us a day would come when we should get our rights. And it *has* come a *lana ma cree*!" And she took the boy in her arms, and kissed him.

"What an unnatural *baste* I am!" muttered O'Regan to himself with his eyes devouring the boy, who returned his gaze with singular boldness. "I thought once that if ever Mr. Cuthbert was found, I'd *ait* him for joy; and now—there he is—at last they say so; and, by gorra, he's mortal like the Grandvilles; but I don't see much of the Fitzmaurices about him. He's a fine boy, too, though, *faix*, there's a bit of the devil in him."

All this O'Regan kept muttering to himself, while Mrs. Sullivan was opening a trunk and showing the contents to the Baronet—

"Where is this priest, Father O'Mara, to be found?" demanded Sir Hugh.

"Oh, then I wish I could tell your honour," answered Mrs. Sullivan. "But sure they would never tell me anything. They made me take an oath upon the blessed cross."

"Who do you mean by *they*?" interrupted the Baronet.

"Why the villains as stole us out of Castle Granville, your honour, and carried us here," replied Mrs. Sullivan, "I never knowed one of them, and that horrid rapparee, Rory, who has charge of the tower, never let us out of his sight."

Sir Hugh examined the trinkets and several articles in the trunk. There was a small beautifully-executed picture of the child's mother also. In fact, although the whole affair was most strange and perplexing, the Baronet had no doubt about the child being his nephew, Cuthbert. The likeness was too great to be the mere effect of chance; then, the age of the child, his being with the very woman that nursed him—altogether he felt satisfied he was not imposed upon.

"There is no use in lingering here," said the Baronet, to O'Regan. "How is it, Dennis? you do not seem so overjoyed as I thought you would be. Have you any doubt about the boy?"

O'Regan rubbed away at the old spot on his head, and looked singularly perplexed. At length he said—

"Why, your honour, I don't doubt but he's Master Cuthbert. He's as like your blessed father as can be, I don't deny it; and he's like his mother. But, faix, I can't make out any likeness to his father."

Sir Hugh smiled, saying—

"It's not every child, Dennis, that's like its father. There, take the boy, and shew him some kindness. You once loved and fondled him. You will come to do so again."

O'Regan approached the boy; but with a childish look

of scorn, he turned away to his nurse, saying proudly enough—

“Keep your civility till it is asked for. I want none to help me as long as I have my nurse.”

Dennis whistled, rubbed his head, and looked at Sir Hugh, who only smiled, saying—

“Come with me, my dear boy. If you are good and affectionate, I will love you, and be a second father to you. Let us be moving now. We can converse on our way. Mrs. Sullivan, my man, will help you to move these things. Have any of you seen that fierce fellow with the blunderbuss?”

“No, Sir Hugh; we searched the whole tower, and there’s not a soul in it, nor an article worth a shilling. Nor can we find Phelim O’Toole.”

“Ho, ho! just as I thought,” ejaculated Dennis. “Pray Mrs. Sullivan, asking your pardon, have you any kind of acquaintance with a Mr. Phelim O’Toole?”

Sir Hugh was descending the stairs with the boy in his hand; and Mrs. Sullivan was following, when O’Regan asked the question—

“Phelim O’Toole?” echoed Mrs. Sullivan.

O’Regan saw her colour change—at least he thought so. However, she replied rather tartly—

“Phelim O’Toole? What should I know of such a person?”

“Faix, Mrs. Sullivan,” returned Dennis, “I thought he might be a blood-relation of the blackguard that left you and your baby to want, but for your ould father.”

Mrs. Sullivan paused on the last step, and turned her face, the colour of scarlet, upon Dennis. Her eyes flashed fire, what she would have said we know not; but at that moment Sir Hugh turned and called her, saying—

“Take charge of this boy, Mrs. Sullivan; and you, Dennis, see these trunks carefully carried down to the boat.”

Mrs. Sullivan hastened to take her charge; while O’Regan began cording the trunks, chuckling to himself, and muttering—

"By my conscience, I hit the right nail on the head. Och, musha, that I had hold of you, Mr. Phelim O'Toole! It's a queer business; it's surely Mr. Cuthbert; and still it's not; but, by gorra, I'm losing the little sense I had."

Leaving Sir Hugh to proceed with his party to Bantry, and there prosecute, as far as it lay in his power, the inquiries he felt bound to make, respecting his nephew and Father O'Mara; we will, in our next chapter, follow, for a short time, the footsteps of Master Phelim O'Toole.

CHAPTER VI

APPARENTLY very busy, with the heavy brogues on his feet, Phelim O'Toole watched, without seeming to do so, the whole party as they ascended the winding stairs into O'Connor's Tower.

No sooner out of sight, than a low chuckling laugh broke from his lips; and stepping out of the passage, he crept close to the tower, by the side of a long, broken, dilapidated wall; and then, getting under the shelter of a low, thick hedge, he rapidly pursued his way down the steep hill into a rocky ravine. Under the shelter of a huge rock, sat a man, who sprung to his feet when he caught sight of Phelim, saying in Irish—

"So, you gave them the slip."

"Faix I did, Rory;" for it was the man with the blunderbuss that spoke first; and beside him, sure enough, was the same formidable weapon.

"And by the law," added Phelim, "you didn't lose time yourself, Rory."

The man laughed.

"Didn't I give them a blaze of the old piece, Dennis,

or rather," (making a mock bow) "Master Phelim O'Toole? More's the pity there was only powder in it, I'd a settled the ould heretic at all events."

"Be gorra, you would," replied O'Toole; "but the master says it aint time. Have you a drop of the creature about you, Rory?"

"Och, Musha, did you ever see me without it, eh?" responded Rory, drawing out of his huge frieze coat a very respectable leather bottle, and handing it to Phelim, who took a hasty pull. Then, throwing his hat to the ground, he raised his hand to his head, and lifted from thence a wig of red hair, disclosing a cropped head of black hair.

Rory, the red head, for *his* was a natural one, laughed—

"Be my sowl, Phelim, they spoilt your beauty for a time cropping you; I'd never know ye, with that handsome coloured wig on ye."

"Ye ugly omadhaun, ye," laughed Phelim; "I wouldn't have that foxy head of yours for a trifle. But ye were saying no one would know me. Yes, one did; duoul have me, but I'll pay him off yet. That cursed O'Regan from the first suspected me; and, at last, knew me—I saw it in his eyes; but, *Naboclish!*" and the eyes of Phelim sparkled, and he clenched his hand hard.

"But, even so, Phelim," responded Rory, "they can make nothing of it. Let us, however, be moving; the master is watching for us I'll be bound. It's going to blow hard too, by the look of the sky; and we must get rid of the Warhawk out of the bay before it sets in."

Following the course of the wild ravine for more than a mile, they emerged into a thick, entangled plantation of dwarf oak and sycamore. At length they came out on the summit of a steep bank, and beneath them lay the sea.

In a singularly picturesque cove, or little bay, nearly hemmed in by lofty and precipitous ranges of rock, lay

riding at a single anchor, a long, low lugger, of some one hundred and forty, or so, tons burthen. The little bight was perfectly sheltered from the long ground-swell that was then running into Bantry Bay, from the south; the fine sandy beach, on one side of the cove, but little disturbed by the gentle rolling in of the tide. Hauled up on that beach was a long-boat, and about fifty or sixty yards from this boat, close up to the rocks, were about sixteen men, stretched out upon the sand in various attitudes of rest. A fire had been kindled between four large stones, over which hung, suspended from three oars, a huge iron pot, the contents of which a man was stirring with a large iron fork.

Rory and his comrade gazed down upon the party beneath with much evident satisfaction, and then cast a look to seaward. Huge masses of dark, copper-coloured clouds, touched by the rays of the sun, were rising heavily and slowly to the south-west; and fitful gusts swept at times across the waters of the bay, curling the waves with foam, and then dying away in the distance.

"We shall have a sneezer from the sou-west, Phelim," said Rory, as he prepared to descend the steep rocks into the cove.

They soon reached the sand, and were received by the party with various witty remarks, and sundry oaths, ejaculations, and questions in a breath.

"Duoul, one at a time," said Phelim, and taking a peep into the iron pot, and snuffing up its contents with evident satisfaction; "where's the captain, boys?"

"I thought ye would have met him," said a short, broad, hard-featured man, in a thick pea-jacket and trowsers. "He's been on the look-out. Ah! there he is, coming down the rocks."

Phelim looked up, and, seeing the person he called the captain descending a narrow, crooked path through the rocks, he went forward to meet him.

"You're welcome, Phelim; all right, eh?" said the captain.

"Well, pretty well, sir," replied O'Toole; "but, by the powers, it was a near thing with me, in spite of my fine foxy head, and the loss of my whiskers."

"Sir Hugh did not recognise you, surely?" interrogated the captain. "Indeed, I do not suppose he ever could have seen you before."

"No—no fear of the baronet," answered O'Toole; "I was safe enough there. But that d— suspicious, black-whiskered rascal, O'Regan, found me out—at least, I think so; but I didn't stop to inquire, but took French leave after I got them into the tower. By the immortal powers, if you had let Rory put a few slugs into the old buss, he'd have settled the baronet's hash altogether."

"I told you before, Phelim," said the person styled captain, and speaking sternly, "it would not do now; it would frustrate all my plans. However, if the boy passes, that's everything—if Brady don't botch it."

"Is it my little woman botch it?" said Dennis, for such was the Christian name of him we have called Phelim O'Toole. "Never heed her—there's not her equal for acting from this to Ballinafad."

"All's right then," responded the captain; "but we must get out of this at once. There's a gale coming in from the sea, and a heavy one too, by the look of it. A king's cruizer has just ran in under her foresail to Castletown, and there's a small armed cutter under Whiddy Island—so there's no use in lying in this bay, and, if the gale lasts, be caught like a fox in a trap." The Captain as he spoke moved on towards the men.

A few words respecting the person styled the Captain. He was a tall, powerful man, in age about thirty-four. His features were perfect—in fact, remarkable for their beauty; his eyes, hair, and beard were raven black; and yet, though handsome in form and feature, there was "a lurking devil" in the bold, piercing glance of his eye, that left a painful feeling in the beholder's mind. Lines of stormy passion could be traced in the deep marks along

the broad massy forehead ; and there was no mistaking the curl of the lip and the flash of the dark eye.

In less than an hour the whole party upon the beach, including Master Phelim and Rory, were aboard the lugger, the anchor up ; and spreading the two double-reefed lugs to the rapidly increasing gale, she glided gracefully and swiftly into the broad swelling waters of the bay. After several tacks, she weathered the eastern head ; and slacking her sheets to the boisterous wind, then collecting its powers for its work of devastation, left a foamy track behind her, as she bore away for the long, low promontory, or rather succession of rocky islands, that form Cape Clear.

It was dark night as the lugger ran in between two small islands, rounded under the lea of the largest, and dropped anchor for the night, protected at least from the wild sea without, though the fierce and stormy gusts burst over the low island with the roar of thunder.

Sir Hugh Granville, in the meantime, reached Bantry. The more he looked at the boy, who readily won upon the kind-hearted baronet, the more he became convinced he was in truth his nephew. Mrs. Sullivan's account of her abduction from Castle Granville was by no means either very clear or very satisfactory. She was carried off, she said, with her infant charge, by several men with crape masks, or faces blackened ; placed first in a boat, and afterwards in a vessel, and finally deposited in O'Connor's tower, under charge of Red Rory. And that was all she knew of the matter. She and the boy were allowed as much air and exercise without the tower as they pleased—always under the eye of Rory. The last three years they had been visited by Father O'Mara. Now, though Sir Hugh made all manner of inquiries in Bantry, no one knew anything of a Father O'Mara in those parts.

Obliged to be satisfied with Mrs. Sullivan's oaths and protestations, and being himself convinced of the striking likeness of the boy to his own family, the Baronet returned

to Castle Granville, resolved to acknowledge Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, to leave him an ample independence, but in no way to alter his previous intentions in regard to his favourite and well-beloved nephew, Gerald.

Shortly after Sir Hugh's return, Mr. Briefless arrived at the Castle with Mr. Harmer. They were kindly welcomed by the Baronet, who felt highly pleased with the appearance and manner of the latter, who at once consented to take charge of the two boys.

Mr. Briefless listened to Sir Hugh's account of his journey with considerable surprise and interest. Having seen Cuthbert, he at once agreed that the likeness was too striking to doubt the identity of the child. Nevertheless, the entire affair was a very perplexing and distressing mystery. He could very plainly see that the whole was a well-planned and organized scheme; but who the actors were, and what could be their ultimate object, it was in vain to conjecture. At all events, Sir Hugh was resolved to banish it from his mind for the time, having much pressing matter in hand previous to embarking for India.

Mr. Briefless drew up Sir Hugh's will. To his nephew, Gerald Granville Fitzmaurice, though the latter name was dropped by the express desire of the baronet when he adopted his nephew, he left the entire of his property at home and abroad, with the exception of ten thousand pounds to his new found nephew, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. Several handsome legacies were devised to faithful servants, and a generous gift of five thousand pounds to his old and esteemed friend, Mr. Briefless.

The will was written, signed, sealed, witnessed, &c., and placed under lock and key. The key was left in the care of the worthy lawyer.

All this being done, and Mr. Harmer comfortably established in Castle Granville, Sir Hugh took a most affectionate leave of little Gerald, and a kind one of his nephew Cuthbert, and sailed for England, whence he shortly after embarked for Calcutta.

Before leaving Castle Granville, he had a long and earnest conversation with Dennis O'Regan. This faithful follower of the Fitzmaurices was strictly enjoined to keep a careful watch over the two boys—to note and mark whatever might occur of any importance—and to keep a watch upon Mrs. Brady Sullivan's proceedings; whom the worthy Baronet had now comfortably established in a neat cottage in the vicinity of the Castle—to see if by chance she held any communication with master Phelim O'Toole, whom O'Regan positively affirmed was no other than her husband. He never had any acquaintance with him, nor did he in fact know his real name. There was always a mystery about the man; but he was pointed out to him several times in Cork, and he never forgot a face he once saw, if he wished to carry the likeness in his mind; and, for certain reasons, he had looked hard at Brady's intended husband when pointed out to him.

From one cause or another, the delays in changing and investing money, in disposing of property and law matters, three years passed over before Sir Hugh Granville was able to sail from the shores of India for England. Imagining each month would be the last, and changing from place to place—the long period of his absence passed over without his receiving a single particle of news of the family he had left behind him.

At length, he sailed with his secretary. This person had made himself extremely useful to Sir Hugh during his stay in India, and in the management of his somewhat intricate affairs. So much so, indeed, that he gladly accepted his offer of accompanying him to Europe.

The return of the Baronet to Castle Granville was hailed by his tenantry with wild joy. Fires were lighted; and, in the vicinity of the mansion, tents were erected, and feasting and revelry became the order of the day. O'Regan was constituted lord of the revels. He loved his master, and would have considered it a disgrace if he were to allow one of his boon companions to quit the

table until their heads should become too heavy to support. The consequence was, that mother earth received them to her maternal bosom in a happy state of insensibility; many to wake with various penalties for their vanished pleasures.

O'Regan himself, who had a head of iron, was in the act of sweetening his thirteenth tumbler, when his only remaining companion, (that is upright one,) with a heavy sigh of regret, and a very mystified look at the master of the revels, allowed himself quietly to sink to the ground; for the banquet was held under an ample marquee.

Dennis O'Regan passed his hand across his eyes, trying to look steadily at his falling friend. It was a look of pity with something of contempt in it.

"Ah," muttered he, "so you are going also, Tim Murphy. Well, well! musha, how easily the head of you takes to the sod. Faix, Tim, I thought you a better man than to be floored with a dozen tumblers of this beautiful liquor, and not more than a gallon of strong ale at dinner. Och, hone! I'm left alone with myself, and it's not morning yet!" And Dennis quietly sipped his thirteenth glass, now and then nodding over the table. "Faix," resumed he, "how green the lights are burning! Be easy, Tim. What a musical feature you have in the middle of your face! It's an ugly drone you have, any how;" and stooping to give a slight kick to Tim, he lost his balance, and fell over his companion. "Bad cess to your ugly phiz!" he grumbled, as he regained his seat; "what an effect it had on my head! quite upset my centre of gravity, as Master Gerald's tutor would say. Well, here's health and long life to the families of Granville and Fitzmaurice."

And off went the tumbler; and then, with a knowing nod to his snoring companions, O'Regan staggered out of the tent, though not without sundry falls over his prostrate friends.

Sir Hugh Granville, in the meantime, had embraced

his nephews with all the warmth and affection of a kind and indulgent parent. Gerald he loved as a son ; while the engaging manners of the young Fitzmaurice—his extremely prepossessing features, and docile disposition gained him golden opinions from all acquainted with the family.

At this period, Gerald was in his tenth year, and Cuthbert in his fourteenth. They were both very handsome boys, but of a totally different character, disposition, and appearance.

Mr. Harmer, their tutor, a man of not only gentlemanly exterior, but possessing a most kind and amiable disposition, soon acquired, over the high-spirited Gerald, perfect control, and at the same time gained his sincere affection. He improved rapidly under Mr. Harmer's tuition ; but with Cuthbert, he found much more difficulty, both in controlling his wayward temper, and in getting him to receive instruction in any way. Young as the boy was, to Mr. Harmer he always appeared as if he was studying a part ; and altogether affecting a tone and manner foreign to his natural temper and disposition. Even at his early age he was subject to violent fits of passion, and quite reckless upon whom he vented his fury, when thwarted in any favourite purpose or pursuit.

As he grew up, he became proud, arrogant, and self-willed ; so much so, that Mr. Harmer despaired of ever gaining any control over him. Still, when he *did* study, he was quick, and evinced considerable talent ; but he had no assiduity.

Though four or five years younger, Gerald kept pace, if not distanced his brother in their studies. But that which pained Mr. Harmer more than anything else in the conduct of his elder pupil, was his evident, and not to be mistaken, dislike of, if not hatred to, his brother Gerald.

Though mild and gentle in disposition, Gerald possessed, for a child, a singularly steady and unshrinking character. He promised, in person, to be a much more

powerful man than his brother, though Cuthbert was tall and well-built for his years.

Such were the brothers at the period of Sir Hugh's return from India; and such the sketch Mr. Harmer gave the Baronet of his nephews.

O'Regan, a day or so after the rejoicings had ceased, and all things had dropped quietly into their usual routine, made his appearance in the Baronet's study.

"I see, O'Regan, by your countenance," said Sir Hugh, "that you have something on your mind that troubles you. Now that we have all got quiet, and into regular household tranquillity, I have time to listen to you."

"In truth, your honour," began O'Regan, "I was anxious to unburden my mind; for some things have taken place, during your honour's absence, that bewilder me; and, perhaps, your honour will be able to make something more out of it than I can."

"Well, sit down then, Dennis, opposite to me," said Sir Hugh, with a good-humoured smile. "A man cannot tell a long story standing, so out with your confession; for I suppose you scarcely require Father Murphy's assistance."

"No, faix, your honour. I made a clear breast of it last Sunday—glory be to God, the good man let me off easy. But what I have to say now, concerns your honour only." And seating himself on so extremely small a portion of the chair that the Baronet expected it to turn over every moment, O'Regan commenced his story.

"You know, Sir Hugh," said he, "how, from the very first, my heart rebelled, as it were, against my young master's brother, and the reason—"

"Never mind the reason now, Dennis," interrupted the Baronet, "but get into the pith of what you have to say at once."

Dennis rubbed his head, got nearer the edge of the chair, and began again.

"As game-keeper and wood-ranger to your honour,

I made it my duty, after your departure, to pay strict attention to the woods and the new plantations on the river. About six or seven months after your departure, as I used to return by the side of the wood near the old ruined church, I constantly met Brady Sullivan, to whom you gave the snug cottage and garden to live in rent free. At first, I didn't mind meeting her so far from her cottage, and in so lonely a place; but after a time it struck me as mighty odd. So one evening, overtaking her as she was making the best of her way home, I says to her, 'It's a beautiful evening, and mighty pleasant for walking; and you seem, Mrs. Brady, to be very fond of that recreation; only, as it's a lonely place'—'I likes lonely places,' says she, cutting me short, with a toss of her head; 'and if I wanted company, I'd choose better than black Dennis O'Regan.' And so tucking up her gown, in reason of the briars on the path, she flounced off with herself. 'Musha, Brady Sullivan,' says I, calling after her, 'I'm no blacker, after all, than the chap as left you and your baby to make the best of it.' 'I wish he was by to hear you, you pitiful fellow,' said she. Just then, your honour, pop goes a gun in the woods; and off goes the bark of a tree close by my lug; and then a great shriek from Mrs. Sullivan, who took to her heels. 'Faix,' says I, 'somebody's poaching after the deer. So I cocked my gun, and began searching the wood all through; but not a soul could I find; and then it struck me that the shot could not have been meant for a deer; for I remembered I had turned all the deer, a few days back, into the High Park.

"Then I thought, 'may be, some of the poachers might have a spite against me;' and, be gorra, it wasn't a bad thought. So, all of a sudden, I took it into my head to watch in the ruins of the old chapel, and try and see what Mrs. Brady was about; and, knowing the old ruins much better than most people in these parts, I hid myself in a niche half built up; and from it I could see any one coming into the ruins; for I suspected it was

to the old chapel Brady Sullivan came to meet somebody.

"I watched a whole week for nothing; but at last, late in the evening, for I changed my hour, I heard some one pushing aside the brambles at the old doorway; and in another moment in walks a man in a great frieze coat, down to his heels, and a big handkerchief tied over his neck and half his face, with a hat stuck far down his forehead, so that I couldn't make out his face at all at all. 'Musha,' says I to myself, 'how careful you are of yourself!' The man sat down on a big stone, with his back to me, and very quietly takes out from under his coat a huge horse-pistol, opens the pan, and examines the priming, whistling a tune quite coolly all the time. Presently I heard a female voice outside, say, 'are you there Dennis?'

"'Och, murder,' says I, to myself, 'is it me she wants?' for I knew the voice to be Mrs. Sullivan's; and a devil a weapon had I, for my carbine was too long to bring into the hole where I was, and I had left it in another place. But the man, when he heard the row, said, out loud, 'Yes, here I am, Brady. There's no fear.' Turning round, and taking his hat off, and throwing it on the ground beside him, I saw his face plain enough; and, by the powers, Sir Hugh, there he was, the red-headed villain, Phelim O'Toole himself, with this difference, his carrotty poll was gone, and a grizzly black head was before me instead."

"Ha!" exclaimed Sir Hugh Granville, as if interested at last. "Are you sure of that?"

"Sure!" echoed O'Regan in a triumphant tone; when, forgetting how very slight a foundation he rested on, he came to the floor, chair and all.

"I thought that would happen," said the Baronet, laughing. "Take a better seat, and go on again."

Dennis, with his fine manly face the colour of scarlet, laughed at his mishap—took his master's advice with respect to the chair, and continued:—

"I was sure of its being Master O'Toole as I am of your

honour. However, in walked Mrs. Brady. 'Musha, why the dickens, Brady,' says Phalim, or Dennis, 'why, didn't you come to the ould spot?' 'Because,' says Brady, 'that meddling blackguard'—saving your honour's presence—she meant myself—'has been watching me this week back—ever since you were foolish enough to take a shot at him.' 'Ho, ho!' says I, 'my blessing on you, Master Phalim, do I owe you that?' 'Foolish, do you call it,' says Phalim; 'here's another for him,' says he, taking the pistol, 'if he crosses my path again. But I tell you what, Brady, you must pack up your traps. We must shift our quarters. The good ould time of the rapparees is gone by. We must cross the water: that last job of the master's isn't likely to answer. The master's off to-morrow; but he wants to see and speak to the boy first; so tell him to be here to-morrow, at dusk. But come out of this place. I don't like being cooped up here like a bagged fox.' So then they both goes out of the chapel into the wood.

"I was dumbfounded, your honour, though I couldn't exactly tell the true meaning of all that I had heard. But it struck me at once that the boy meant was Master Cuthbert; and that, perhaps, after all, he wasn't Mister Gerald's brother."

"This is very strange, Dennis," said Sir Hugh, thoughtfully. "But did you contrive to hide yourself the following evening?"

"I was there, sure enough, your honour. I gave out that I was going over to Glenross, and took a great round and got into my hiding place early in the day. But I hadn't the luck to hear all I might have heard, by reason of the sleep—bad cess to it—that came over me. But your honour shall know all I did hear. As I sat for hours squeezed in the niche, thinking and thinking, the sleep came over me; when suddenly I was roused by the sound of men's voices, close under where I lay. I awoke with such a start, that I knocked a piece of the mortar out of the wall. 'What's that, *father*?' were the first words

I heard. And you may be certain, your honour, I became as quiet as a startled mouse, and applied my eyes to the hole. Musha, it was almost dark, save a narrow streak of moonlight, that entered through the old window; and in that light I saw standing leaning on the broken altar a tall figure of a man wrapped in a large mantle, with a slouched beaver on his head. Close beside him (he was plain enough to be seen) stood Master Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. As I said the first words I heard were—‘What is that, father?’ ‘Never heed such trifles, boy,’ said the tall man. ‘Stones and mortar will fall in ruins.’ You must pluck up more nerve, and not quake at a show in the moonlight, or start at a noise. Listen to me once more; for you are out long enough. You wish to come with me; but that cannot be. Play out your part; but beware how you betray yourself to the keen eyes of that puritanical’—yes, that was the word, your honour—‘puritanical hypocrite, Mr. Harmer. You have a bright prospect before you, William, if you have patience. That prying rascal, O’Regan, must be silenced. If Dennis had been sober the other day, he would have spoiled his spying. But he is easily removed.’ ‘Am I,’ said I to myself—‘Blood and ouns, we are not dead yet.’”

“Well, I am rejoiced you are not, O’Regan,” said the Baronet, smiling; “no one would regret a faithful follower more than I should you. But what came next, Dennis?”

“Thank your honour! God bless you and yours!” exclaimed the warm-hearted domestic, with emotion. “Well, sir, the stranger went on to say—‘though your passing as the elder Fitzmaurice has not fully answered my expectations, yet you must continue here till Sir Hugh comes back. Things may happen that will create a change.’ ‘Would there be any harm,’ said the boy, anxiously, ‘if I were to shoot that old villain, O’Regan, some day when we are out shooting? It could be made to look like accident. He is always saying Gerald will

be a better man and a better shot. I could hit *him*, any how.' 'Musha, God speed you,' says I; 'but I'm your match now.' 'You had better not meddle with O'Regan,' said the stranger, laughing; "it would do no good at present. But now you know fully how to act. Let your dislike of this favourite of Sir Hugh, Gerald Granville, as he is to be styled, sleep awhile. The time for action is not yet come.' So saying they moved out from the chapel. I was dying for a look at the stranger, and I hastened to creep out of my hiding-place and run round, trusting to chance to get a glimpse; but they were clean gone, whichever way they went. And now, your honour, I've done. I have not spoken a word of this to any human being. I first intended to tell Mr. Harmer; but then I thought what good could come of it? It's not right to speak to strangers of one's master's secrets—so I kept a keen eye on Master Cuthbert, and waited till your honour came back. And now, Sir Hugh, what does your honour think?"

Before the Baronet could reply, there was a violent noise without the door, and Mr. Harmer's voice was heard speaking calmly to some one. The next moment the door opened, and that gentleman appeared, holding young Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, but with a sudden and violent jerk the passionate boy released his arms, and turning round, fled down the stairs, and was out of sight in a moment.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. HARMER, entering the study, apologised to Sir Hugh, saying that, on passing towards his own room, he, to his great surprise, caught Cuthbert kneeling by

the door with his ear to the key-hole. As this was not the first time he had detected the young gentleman in a mean and servile act, he thought to check him for the future, by exposing him to the censure of his uncle.

The Baronet, dismissing O'Regan, requested Mr. Harmer to be seated, as he wished to have half an hour's conversation with him.

Sir Hugh then made Gerald's tutor acquainted with the particulars that he himself had just heard from O'Regan. Mr. Harmer—already acquainted with the manner in which Cuthbert Fitzmaurice became a member of the Baronet's family, and also with the previous history of the Granville and Fitzmaurice families—listened attentively; but was by no means so astonished as the Baronet expected.

"I have often, Sir Hugh," replied Mr. Harmer, "pondered over the circumstances relating to the finding of the supposed Cuthbert; and, at last, suspected the existence of some deep-laid scheme. The proofs given of the boy's indenture were extremely doubtful; indeed, mostly depending on the veracity of a woman whose character, even in early life, was none of the best; and whose conduct, after your leaving this country, became extremely irregular. Then her sudden departure, under pretence of visiting a relation residing in Cork; and, from which, she has not yet returned. All these circumstances, combined with the strange character and temper, and singular conduct of the boy himself, have led me to the conclusion that he is an impostor."

"But you must confess, my dear sir," said the baronet, in a doubtful tone, "his strong likeness to my family. He is most uncommonly like my eldest sister's portrait that hangs in the picture gallery."

"Yes, there is certainly a strong likeness," returned Mr. Harmer; "a freak of nature, not altogether unprecedented. I am, as you yourself know, acquainted with the melancholy history and fate of your elder sister. Suppose," continued Mr. Harmer, thoughtfully, "suppose

she did not perish, as you were led to believe, and that this youth, after all, might be your sister's child. Pardon me if I pain you, Sir Hugh; this is only a sudden idea of mine—why it came across me, at this moment, I cannot say."

"No, no!" said the baronet, who started and changed colour, when Mr. Harmer mentioned his sister; "no—I am satisfied my unfortunate sister perished. The vessel they sailed in was seen by six witnesses to founder with every soul on board. However, what puzzles me now is, how to act with respect to this boy, after this strange discovery."

"Suppose, Sir Hugh," replied Mr. Harmer, "you were to send him to a public school, and afterwards to get him a commission in the army. Time may unravel much of this mystery."

"Your idea is good, my dear sir," said the baronet.

But Sir Hugh's generous intentions were, before night, completely upset; for the supposed Cuthbert Fitzmaurice returned no more to the Castle, and was no where to be found; nor could the slightest trace of his flight be discovered, though the baronet sent O'Regan and several domestics, well-mounted, to pursue him; but, though they took different routes, none returned with any intelligence of the fugitive.

The greatest astonishment was excited in the minds of all concerned or acquainted with the singular appearance and disappearance of the boy. But, like everything else in this bustling and changeable world, after a time it ceased to be a subject of wonder and gossip.

Sir Hugh every day became more attached and devoted to his nephew Gerald, who was universally beloved. Resolving to spare no pains with his education, he determined—while Gerald proceeded with his worthy tutor to Oxford—to go and reside in England, and select a residence in the vicinity of the University.

It sometimes entered the mind of Sir Hugh that Gerald's life might be endangered by those secret enemies.

Though he said little on the subject to Mr. Harmer, when he mentioned his sister's fate, yet he often thought over that gentleman's opinion. Could it be possible, after all, that his sister did not perish? After the most diligent enquiries, he could never learn the real name of her husband. As to the one of Fenwick, which was that used when he hired the sloop Mary, he felt satisfied that was an assumed one. Altogether the good Baronet felt pained, and grieved, at the mystery that enveloped the early history of his family.

Having resolved to reside for a few years in England, he made his arrangements accordingly, to the great regret and sorrow of his attached tenantry.

Mr. Gardener, the name of the secretary who had accompanied Sir Hugh to India, and in whom he felt the greatest confidence, was left as agent, or steward, over the properties—Mr. Briefless to act in case of any law transactions. With his nephew, and tutor, O'Regan, and half-a-dozen old servants, the Baronet sailed for England, and having found a most desirable and beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames, with extensive grounds belonging to it, Sir Hugh became the purchaser.

The Baronet and his nephew were delighted with their new residence—an easy distance from Oxford, and adjoining the domain of Lord Althorp, a nobleman with whom he rejoiced to renew an acquaintance, first commenced at the University of Oxford. Lord Althorp was also highly pleased with his distinguished neighbour. Besides this advantage, Sir Hugh was gratified to find he was within eight miles of a most esteemed friend and brother officer—a Captain Somerville—whose singular adventures in India were the subject of much conversation at the time of Sir Hugh's residence there. The two friends congratulated each other on becoming such near neighbours. Mrs. Somerville—an inhabitant of India from her early years—had been extremely beautiful in her youth. At this period she was the mother of four fine children.

Having thus established the Baronet and his nephew, the one at Deer Hurst, the name of the Baronet's villa, the other at Oxford; we must pass over a period of six years, and introduce our hero to our readers—on the completion of his one-and-twentieth year.

Mr. Harmer had accepted the office of Sir Hugh's domestic chaplain, with a very munificent salary for life; for the Baronet entertained for him a sincere friendship. In fact, in the course of years, he had become so accustomed to his society, that he looked upon him more as one connected with the family, than otherwise.

Great rejoicings took place both at Deer Hurst and upon Sir Hugh's estates in Ireland, on Gerald Granville's attaining his one-and-twentieth year.

At this period—the reign of Queen Anne—it was much the fashion for young men of family and fortune to enter the army as volunteers, holding a nominal rank; and thus serve for two or three years.

Gerald had very early evinced a strong desire for a military life; and at length, through the persuasions of Captain Somerville, Sir Hugh consented to part with his adopted son and heir, for a short period.

"You shall make a campaign in Flanders, Gerald," said the Baronet, one day after dinner, when he and his friend, Captain Somerville, and Gerald sat enjoying their claret, in the saloon looking out upon the Thames, and the lovely scenery on both sides of this classic stream. "I will furnish you with letters to the Duke of Marlborough, and also to a distinguished officer holding a high command under him—Colonel Delmar, an old brother-officer of mine. We served together in India—you may remember him, Somerville; he was major of your regiment when you served in Mysore."

"Yes, I remember him well, Sir Hugh," replied Captain Somerville; "and a gallant and a high-hearted fellow he was. He was with me in the Deccan, at the time I was so singularly entrapped by the Princess, or Begum, as they are styled in Hindostan."

"By-the-bye, Somerville," said the Baronet, "you put me in mind of a promise you made me a long time ago, and which unforeseen circumstances prevented your fulfilling."

"Ah, I guess what it is, Sir Hugh," returned the captain; "a narrative of my adventures in Mysore, eh?"

"The very thing. My nephew will be delighted with your singular story; and any account of the wild tribes of the Deccan is sure to captivate his romantic disposition. But mind, my dear boy," added the old Baronet, in an affectionate tone and manner, and laying his hand on his shoulder, "though I have consented to let you play the soldier in Flanders for a year or so, there must be no rambling and wandering over the wide sea, to have a glimpse of the grim warriors of the continent of India."

Gerald laughed, saying:

"I will be quite content, dear uncle, to serve under our glorious Duke. I promise to ask no further favour in that way. And now, Captain Somerville, you will give me the greatest treat in the world, in listening to your adventures. India is as yet almost a *terra incognita* to me; and the little I have read of our conquests there has greatly excited my curiosity."

"Well," returned the captain, "you shall have my personal adventures, at all events; and as they brought me in contact with a very extraordinary man, who is now making his name famous in Hindostan, they may perhaps interest you; especially as this is a remarkably wet evening, even for our uncertain month of June."

Captain Somerville then began.

But we must commence his story at the opening of a chapter, not at the close.

CHAPTER VII.

CAPTAIN SOMERVILLE'S STORY.

"I was only nineteen," began Captain Somerville, "when I landed on the continent of India, a Cornet in a distinguished dragoon regiment. I must pass over—for my story would be too long—the four first years of inactive service, and come at once to the period when our regiment, in which I was then a lieutenant, with several companies of infantry, was marched into the Deccan to the aid of the Nizam.

"The first battle we were engaged in was on the great plain lying below the great fortress of Poorunder. Besides the British forces, there were several tribes of the Deccan, and a strong force of cavalry under some noted Mahratta chiefs. It was a new and magnificent spectacle to me. As we continued some time stationary, anxiously waiting for orders to advance, our eyes eagerly following every turn and change of the battle, my attention was attracted by a body of cavalry, equipped in the chivalrous costume of one of the many tribes of the Deccan. But what most astonished me was that the body of horsemen was led into the field by a woman—a Mahratta Princess. They spurred furiously across the plain, with wild cries, and gallantly charged a formidable body of the enemy's infantry. The horses they rode, though small, were fiery and difficult to restrain. The men were all vested in coats of mail, formed of links of iron chain, which covered their entire persons to the knees. At the back, this chain armour was divided, and fell over their horse's flanks. Their head gear was, however, various—some wore helmets, others iron skull-caps, and many turbans plated with steel. The heads of their

horses were defended by plates of iron, and even of silver. As they charged, they fired their matchlocks without any regularity; and then, slinging them behind their backs, dashed on with their long spears in charge.

"I kept my eyes on the Princess, when Major Delmar rode up, and immediately we received orders to charge the Rajah of —, whose cavalry had just then attacked the Mahratta Princess.

"Away we went upon the Rajah's horse at a terrible pace. Down went man and steed before our heavy horse. But in the *mêlée* I got separated from my troop; for several bodies of infantry and cavalry had rushed to the spot, and a terrible contest, common enough in our Indian wars, ensued.

"While fighting and struggling through the mass, I came up with the Begum, dismounted, and fiercely contending with two warriors splendidly armed, who were dragging her off the field. With a cut of my sabre, I forced one of them to let go his hold of the Princess. In an instant, the other seized the bridle of my steed, and with a violent jerk, threw him on his haunches.

"The blow I intended for this worthy's skull, he caught on a small circular shield of rhinoceros-hide, plated with steel; and, in return, drove his sword into the neck of my poor horse, who plunging madly, fell backwards, leaving me dismounted and in a rather ticklish situation; but I was unexpectedly reinforced by the Princess and several of her troop who had arrived to her assistance—nevertheless, we had a fierce and desperate struggle for our lives; and should shortly have finished our career, but for the timely arrival of a colour-sergeant of infantry, and about fifty or sixty soldiers or sepoy.

"I had received one or two flesh wounds; but not very severe. Just then the remainder of the Begum's regiment made their way into the presence of their chieftainness, by whose orders I was at once supplied with a horse; and in a few moments more, we got clear of the contest. I was just able to sit on my saddle, and no

more ; so I rode slowly towards our camp—the Princess by my side.

“As soon as we were clear of the field—for she was slightly wounded herself—she addressed me to my surprise in extremely good English—she declared she owed me her life ; and that her gratitude was great.

“I had then time to examine this amazonian Princess. The splendid dress she wore set off a remarkably fine figure to great advantage—she did not appear to be more than two or three and twenty. Her complexion was not very dark : indeed I have seen many a brunette much more so. Her features were decidedly handsome, and her dark eyes were as brilliant a pair as ever dazzled our sex. Yet strange to say, her expression of countenance was anything but pleasing.

“When arrived near the camp, after some trifling remarks and conversation, she bade me farewell in a very amiable and warm manner.

“‘Adieu, sahib,’ said she, ‘you will hear from me again—pray accept that horse till I send you one better calculated to carry your weight into the field.’

I was certainly no very light weight, even at that period, being over six feet, and strongly built. The Begum then waved her hand, and galloped off, followed by her troop.

Though my wounds were not very severe, they nevertheless kept me confined nearly three weeks. During that time, the Princess Onjein, as she was styled—it being the name of the territory over which she ruled—sent me a splendid Arab, and a richly-mounted brace of Mahratta pistols as presents ; also a purse of gold mohurs for the colour-srgeant, who so opportunely arrived to our assistance.

“Major Delmar and my brother-officers bantered me a good deal about the conquest I had made of the princess ; gravely advising me to offer her my hand, and thus become a powerful chief of the Deccan. I only laughed ; but time proved that, though I had no intention of making

love to this Indian princess, she had taken it into her head to make love to me.

By inquiries, I heard some curious particulars of this Begum. She was a widow, some said, for a second time; and it was supposed that she had poisoned one of her husbands, and made away with the other in a fit of frantic jealousy. One of her husbands was said to have been an Englishman; but no one knew his name.

"Some time after, our regiment was ordered to Meerut, where the Princess Onjein was residing in a handsome mansion—I had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with her, for she mixed freely in the English society then. However, to shorten this part of my story, it ended in the Mahratta Princess letting me know, that she would accept the offer of my hand. This Indian mode of proceeding rather astonished me. I nevertheless politely declined the honour.

"Almost immediately after this, the Princess quitted Meerut; and, in a short time, my brother-officers having ceased to quiz me, I forgot all about the affair. A few months subsequently, I was ordered, with a detachment of our regiment, to a place some distance from Meerut, on account of a sudden breaking out of fever, attributable to the hot winds that prevail at Meerut.

"We had an hospital erected on the banks of a nulla, or small stream, which ran through our encampment; and our tents were pitched in a cool and pleasant situation, within a few coss of the valley of Dhoon. Those of our officers whose constitutions admitted of the pursuit, enjoyed themselves in hunting in this fine valley, which extended to within about ten coss of the territory of the Princess Onjein. I was myself extremely partial to field sports, and therefore was one of the most ardent in following up those pastimes.

"The extensive valley of Dhoon had every variety of game within its limits. Its thick and impervious jungles sheltered the royal tiger, and other wild and ferocious animals. The valley had also charms for the lover of the picturesque

"One day standing by the entrance of my tent, I observed a Hindoo come up from performing some ablutions in the stream, and walk towards my tent. Though the sun was then at its greatest power, the man's head was bare. He was of a tall imposing figure, which was seen to advantage, as his only covering was a slight cotton wrapper round the waist. The rest of the body was well oiled. When close beside my tent, he commenced turning round; at first slowly, but gradually increasing to a surprising velocity, drawing nearer to me each moment.

"Suddenly, when almost within arms' length, he clapped his hand to his head, and fell forward on his face.

"I thought this a part of the performance. Imagining the man was a santon or mirabout, I waited patiently till he should be pleased to get up. But there he lay, like one dead.

"Being rather surprised, I approached, and found he was in a fit. I called three or four of my sepoys, and had him carried to our hospital, having sent to the surgeon's tent, requesting him to see to the man.

"By judicious management, he was recovered from the sun-stroke; but was immediately after attacked by a violent fever. Every care was taken of him by my directions; and at the end of five weeks he was pronounced cured.

"I was one day writing alone in my tent, when the Hindoo, as I considered him, entered and roused my attention by a heavy sigh. He was standing close beside me, his tall, fine figure quite erect, and his arms folded across his ample chest; his large, dark eyes were fixed upon the ground.

"I am glad to see you so well, after the severe attack you had," said I, taking some silver from my desk. I was holding it out to him, when, with a wave of his hand, he stopped me.

"'Christian,' said he solemnly, 'there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet—I am a Mussulman. Never-

theless, I owe you my life. Sahib," he continued, slowly, 'I came hither to take your life.'

"I stared at the stern, calm face of the stranger with extreme astonishment. He was motionless: not a muscle of his frame moved: a certain grandeur and dignity were in the attitude of his noble figure that interested and struck me forcibly. I began to fancy his brain was still unsettled, and therefore replied quietly—

"'You are surely in error. I could never have incurred your enmity—wherefore seek my life?'

"'Nevertheless, sahib, such was my purpose, till the hand of God smote me. You have saved my life; henceforth yours is sacred to me. Now, Christian, farewell! But take this warning from me—hunt no more in the valley of Dhoon.—Farewell!' And, bowing to the ground, he turned about and left the tent.

"I made no attempt whatever to stop him, for I positively considered him deranged. It was not till night, as I lay sleepless from the great heat, that I thought of the Princess Onjein. Could she, in revenge for the insult of refusing her hand—for the passions and feelings of the Mahratta race are excessively violent—could she have induced the mirabout to take my life? She was represented as vindictive and cruel; she possessed the power of life and death over her subjects, and had done many deeds that, in other lands, would have held her up for public execration. However, I was of too careless, perhaps reckless, a disposition to heed the warning I had received. Some days afterwards, Major Delmar and two other officers arrived to enjoy a few days' hunting in the valley, in which I joined without meeting anything unusual. After their departure I continued amusing myself, accompanied by four of my sepoy. One day Captain Edgehill and I, with half-a-dozen attendants, left before daylight, for a special day's shooting. During the morning, we were separated, he having followed an animal he had not seen before. I had two sepoy with me; and, in making the circuit of a thick jungle, we were suddenly

surrounded by more than a dozen men, armed with spear and matchlock. I knew by their caftans and turbans, and by their having matchlocks, that they belonged to the Begum Onjein's regiment. Stepping back, I cocked my rifle, while my sepoy did the same with their muskets.

" 'Resistance is useless, sahib,' said the leader of the band, 'and will only lead to the slaughter of your men, and perhaps of yourself. I am ordered to take you, dead or alive.'

" 'Who has dared to give you such an order against a British officer?' I exclaimed. 'Do you know the peril you are incurring?'

" Without answering me, they closed suddenly in upon us; and though I knocked one of the rascals over, they disarmed us.

" 'You will dearly repent this outrage; and think not that the Princess Onjein's rank will save her,' I exclaimed, as I struggled desperately in the grasp of half-a-dozen of the villains.

" 'It is no business of mine,' returned the Hindoo officer, very coolly, 'to inquire into my chieftain's orders. We are taught to obey. You must remain our prisoner. If you wish civil treatment, cease to struggle, where it is utterly useless.'

" There was some truth in that, at all events. So with a feeling of considerable disgust, we were marched forward, surrounded by the men with matchlocks ready, and spears held within an inch of our backs. In a few minutes we came to an open space, where I was startled on perceiving lying dead upon the parched grass, about four or five bodies. By their attire, which is both scanty and singular, I knew them at once to be Mahairs—a race of people styling themselves followers of Mahomet, but of no creed whatever; and entirely supporting themselves by rapine and murder. At different periods they had given our troops considerable trouble in hunting them out of their mountain fastnesses.

" As I looked down at the miserable wretches, severa

shots close behind me made me turn round with a start. Good God ! I saw my two sepoys fall beside the Mahairs, brutally murdered by the Hindoo soldiers. Exasperated to fury, I seized a musket from one of the men, and with it brought one of the Hindoos dead to the ground. The next moment a blow from a clubbed matchlock stretched me senseless beside my unfortunate soldiers.

“When I regained my senses, which I speedily did—for I was sufficiently shaken to rouse the dead—I found myself, with my head bound up, strapped to the back of a camel, which, trotting, nearly dislocated every bone in my body. This abominable conveyance lasted two mortal hours, when we arrived at the foot of a mountain pass. Here, to my great satisfaction, I was transferred to a covered palanquin, and eight bearers.

“Thanking heaven for this change, I stretched my aching limbs, and began to collect my thoughts, and ponder over what might be the result of this outrage and cruel murder of my sepoys by order of this Princess Onjein. My men were slain, no doubt to completely hide my abduction ; and being found with the dead Mahairs, it would be supposed that a party of those freebooters had attacked and murdered them, carrying me off prisoner.

“All night long we travelled, during which time, as I neither ate nor drank, I felt feverish and thirsty. It was scarcely light when the palanquin stopped ; the curtains were drawn back, and my hands untied. I was then desired to alight. I was now in the court of a large building—a fortress I guessed from the style ; but the light was imperfect. My conductor led me through a low door, and we ascended a flight of steps in the passage. At last we halted, and the leader, in a loud voice exclaimed—

“‘Sambo ! rascal ! where are you ?’”

“I could understand Hindostanee very well at this time, having studied it while in Meerut.

“Immediately a light appeared above ; and, shortly after, I perceived a negro of a most singular shape and dis-

gusting ugliness, holding a lamp. One of his shoulders was considerably higher than the other ; his legs were so bowed as to form a circle ; while his ears were so immense that they appeared as if they had been dragged down on his shoulders by weights.

“ We next ascended to the elevation on which stood the negro, who led the way up another flight, and then opened a strong door, and ushered us into a chamber ; saying he would bring me some food and some drink, he and the soldier retired, barring and locking the door most carefully.

“ I then cast a look round my future abode, for the daylight entered through an immense loophole ten or twelve feet from the floor. The walls were hung with Indian matting, made from grass ; there was a wooden couch, a table, and two singularly constructed seats, and a large pitcher of water.

“ While I was taking a survey, and just about to wash the blood from the back of my head, the door opened, and Master Sambo entered, with a dish of smoking rice and curry, and a jar of wine, or something very like it, though it was very sweet.

“ Placing these on the table, without a word, the black retired. I devoured the curry and rice, which was exceedingly well-cooked, drank a portion of the compound in the jar, and then having washed my head, I threw myself on the couch ; and notwithstanding all that had occurred, fell fast asleep. I did not awake till evening, when my jailer, Sambo, brought me a lamp, more rice, and boiled fowl.

“ ‘ The Princess feeds me well, at all events,’ thought I. ‘ Still, captivity will crush my heart, if it lasts. But I will make some effort to get out of this, even if I have to commence by knocking the negro’s head against the wall.’ But the negro was always accompanied to the door by a Hindoo, armed to the teeth.

“ The next day, to my surprise, Sambo brought me a very handsome English dressing-case ; and, to my greater

astonishment, a dozen English books. Amongst them, were four volumes of Shakespeare's plays.

" 'These,' thought I, after a little reflection, ' must either have belonged to one of the Princess's husbands, or else they are part of the plunder of some British settlement.'

" ' Massa, shave,' said the negro, grinning and showing a most unquestionable row of formidable grinders, ' see Princess soon.'

" ' Oh,' said I, ' so you can talk. Tell me—'

" But Sambo only shook his head, and walked off.

" I was rejoiced, however, that I was to see this strange Princess, who at one time sought my life, and now detained me a prisoner. Although I scarcely knew, when I should see her, whether to get into a rage, or laugh at the whole affair as a farce. But then the murder of the sepoys damped my spirits completely. This wanton and cruel outrage could never be forgiven or forgotten. When made captive, I was clad in a light shooting-dress, and could make no change in this; but the articles in the dressing-case were of great use.

" Placing my wooden couch against the wall, I climbed up to the loop-hole, which was quite large enough for a man to pass through. The wall was of massive thickness. On poking my head out, I perceived that I was in a tower, full eighty feet from the ground; beneath me was a narrow court, bounded by a thick rampart wall, full thirty feet high. A Hindoo sentinel paced under my window, sheltered from the sun by the ~~rest~~ wall, who had a huge matchlock on his shoulder. Outside the wall, was an extensive plain, bounded by a very lofty range of mountains; while scattered over a considerable extent of ground were numbers of Hindoo hovels, for the low caste. The country round, as far as I could see, appeared cultivated, though in the extreme distance, there seemed to be a vast forest of jungle.

" The heat being too great to expose my head long to the sun, I descended from my situation, and passed the rest

of the day and evening, alternately reading and vexing myself with anxious thoughts.

"Two days after, Sambo, with a couple of Hindoo soldiers entered my chamber, to conduct me before the Princess. Having descended the long flight of steps, and passed through several doors, which I conjectured led into the interior of the fortress, we crossed a small court, and then entered another of handsome appearance, being planted all round with jonquils and rose-bushes, with a large fountain playing into an immense marble basin. From this court, we went into an open arched hall, of considerable dimensions. The walls on each side were ornamented with Hindoo portraits of a singular design and execution, together with fresco drawings of gods and goddesses; while heroes, combating sundry strange animals intended for tigers, elephants, &c., decorated the ceilings and walls also.

"At the upper end of this temple—for such I supposed it was—on a raised platform, in a magnificent species of chair, sat the Princess Onjein, her person covered with jewels and other ornaments. Along each side of the temple, were ranged more than a score of the Begum's female attendants; but that which attracted and rivetted my gaze at once, was a young girl, dressed in very plain garments—after the fashion of the Persian slave girls—who was seated on a low stool at the Princess's feet; as I advanced towards the platform, the young girl's face was turned towards me, with a look of intense curiosity and agitation—I started, I knew not why; there was something in the look of that lovely, melancholy countenance, that went to my heart, with a singular sensation.

"The next instant, the Begum, with a fierce and angry frown, looked down upon the young maiden, and said something in a low voice. The fair girl, for fair she was, as any European, rose from her seat, displaying her tall and beautiful figure, and left the platform by a side door.

"I must here describe the other personages standing beside the raised platform, for I was led to a seat, and left to myself.

"To the right of the Princess, stood a most commanding-looking warrior, cased in as complete a suit of armour, as ever knight of old. His hands were covered with gauntlets; on his left arm, he bore a very handsome circular shield of transparent rhinoceros-hide, plated with polished steel, and richly ornamented; his helmet was, however, without visor, instead of which a curious plating of steel rings, completely hid all his features, except the eyes.

"As I stood irresolute whether to take a seat, or advance and boldly demand my freedom, the Begum clapped her hands smartly. Immediately the lower part of the hall was filled with Hindoo soldiers; and then a young officer attached to some other potentate advanced up the hall, and, bending his knee, presented in a rich shawl a folded paper.

"The Princess took the letter, but presented the shawl to the bearer, who, bowing very gracefully, retired a few paces. I was not a little curious to learn what all this meant, and how it was intended to end. As the Begum read the letter, her dark, brilliant eyes flashed in triumph, and then the letter was handed to the silent and stately warrior by her side. He read it, but made no manner of remark.

"Again the Princess clapped her hands, and the door at the side opening, a troop of Persian dancing girls entered the hall, and commenced performing. They then sung some Persian songs very sweetly. After which, some female slaves brought in trays with cakes, Persian grapes, and various fruits, which were handed round.

"The Princess then waved her hand, and, like a fairy pageant, the spectators and the warrior in armour vacated the hall, leaving me, considerably surprised, standing within a few feet of this Asiatic Princess.

"'Captain sahib,' said the Begum, fixing her piercing

eyes upon me, 'I have acknowledged before that I owe my life to your gallantry.'

"I very ungallantly muttered to myself—

"'I wish to Heaven I had left you to fight it out without interfering.'

"'As a Sovereign Princess,' continued the Begum, 'I sent and offered you not only my hand, but I promised to resign into your hands the power I possess.'

"I here very quietly observed, that I had received her gracious offer with sincere gratitude; but that not feeling at all inclined for matrimony, I had respectfully declined. Besides, not being partial to the climate of Hindostan, as——

"'Sahib,' interposed the princess, 'do you hear me?'

"'Your highness, I never heard better in my life,' I replied, perhaps tartly. 'The fact is, Princess, this mode of proceeding is reversing the order of things. The customs of Hindostan are strange to a European. May I therefore entreat, Princess, that I may be restored to liberty? and, notwithstanding the dreadful—'

"'You may save yourself explanation,' haughtily interrupted the Princess. 'Now hear me, once for all. I repeat my offer. Take three days to consider; but of this be assured—a woman and a Princess is not to be scorned and insulted twice with impunity. At the end of that time, you will learn to know the difference between the love and the hate of a Mahratta Princess.'

"Suddenly clapping her hands, she rose from her seat, and with an air of haughty disdain, passed out by the same door by which the beautiful girl I before noticed had left the platform.

"Boiling with rage and vexation, I was escorted to my chamber, and left to the consolation of my own thoughts.

CHAPTER VIII.

"My first ruminations were upon the young and lovely girl I had seen at the Begum's feet, and the strange look of agitation and curiosity she had cast upon me as I passed up the hall. She certainly more resembled a European than a native of Georgia or Persia ; since my arrival in India, I had seen many beautiful slaves from both those countries ; and they differed so materially from the fair blue-eyed girl I had seen, that I felt satisfied she was from neither Georgia or Persia. The Persian women are in general inclined to fat, with black hair, high forehead, aquiline nose, full cheeks, and too large a chin for beauty. Their countenances are oval, and the complexion slightly tinged with olive—those of the southern provinces even of a dark brown. Now the young girl I had noticed, and was so struck with, was exceedingly fair, with a round face, blue eyes, and light auburn hair ; while her figure was tall, slender, and graceful.

"From thoughts of the fair girl I turned to my own singular situation. The idea of a woman imprisoning a man till he should consent to marry her, had something extremely ludicrous in it. Yet I felt it to be no joke. Doubtless my brother officers would either consider me murdered, or a prisoner to some of the tribes of Mahairs.

"After the negro had left me a lamp, the second night after my interview with the Princess, I suddenly took it into my head to examine my door, from the circumstance of not hearing the negro push the bolts outside into their sockets. I saw that the lock, though a strong and massive one, possessed but little ingenuity in its construction, and that, with the assistance of a small iron bar, I could pick out a brick, and force back the bolt of the lock. Turning up my roughly constructed couch, I found it was held together by four iron-rods ; one of these, after

half an hour's trial, I extricated, and waited till I considered all the inhabitants of the fortress buried in repose, when I commenced operations against the huge bolt, and exerting the great strength nature had gifted me with, I forced back the bolt, and, to my exceeding satisfaction, found the door swing open.

"I paused a moment and listened, but not a sound disturbed the silence of the night.

"Taking my lamp in one hand, and my bar for a weapon in the other, I descended the stairs till I came to a landing-place. Here a door attracted my attention. On pushing it, it opened, and I saw before me a narrow passage, as if constructed between two walls; along this passage I proceeded, till stopped by another door, which opened with a latch, and on passing through it, and holding up my lamp, which gave but a very faint light, I took a survey of the place around me. All was perfectly still. I now fancied I had got into the inhabited part of the fortress. I was aware that the male part of the inmates were always separated from that part of the building inhabited by the women. The place I had entered was a wide and handsome gallery, or kind of corridor, with many doors opening on both sides into it.

"Walking cautiously along this corridor, and seeking for an outlet, just as I paused near a door I heard the murmur of a voice within. Listening intently, I caught the sound of a female voice, singing a low, plaintive tune. To my extreme astonishment, I caught some of the words. The singer, whoever she might be, was warbling in my native tongue. She paused; and then some deep and heavy sighs fell upon my ear. Surprised beyond measure, I looked at the door, and perceived that it was fastened by two strong bolts outside.

"'A captive like myself,' thought I.

"In the impulse of the moment, I drew back the bolts and pushed open the door; as I thrust my unlucky head inside the chamber, a loud scream came from the inmate.

"'Lady,' said I, entering, 'be not alarmed.'

"In one single glance, I perceived before me the beautiful girl attired as a slave, whom I had seen in my interview with the Begum.

"'Good heavens, Captain Somerville!' exclaimed she, in pure English, 'my scream has ruined us.'

"I was bewildered. The young girl hastily snatched a folded paper from the table, saying—

"'Secrete, pray conceal this; it will tell you who I am. Good God! here they are!'

"And sinking down into a chair, she buried her face in her hands, bursting into tears. The next instant the room was filled with half-dressed females, with the Princess Onjein at their head.

"I was literally stupified; never before, in all my life, was I exposed to such a battery of unveiled charms.

"'Ahi, Wullah, Wullah, illa il Ala!' burst from the lips of the Begum's women; while the Princess herself, rather thinly clad, in truth, stood like one electrified, when her eyes rested upon me.

"But it was not in the nature of the charming sex to remain thus tongue-tied; and at once a torrent of the most violent abuse in Hindostan, broken English, and German, was poured upon my head without pause. The Princess actually stamped and foamed with rage. At length I could understand part of the torrent of abuse of which I was the luckless object.

"'So,' she exclaimed, 'tis for this vile wanton that the hand of a Mahratta Princess is scorned. But you shall both feel my vengeance. Why do not that dog, Sambo, and the guards, come when summoned?'

"Before I could utter a word the young girl rose from her seat, removing her hands from her face, which was pale and bathed with tears. Still she drew herself proudly up, with her large shawl wrapped closely over her person, and facing the furious Princess, she said, calmly and haughtily—

"'Madam, you are using terms to me, which you are aware, in your heart, are unmerited. This gentleman is

utterly unacquainted with me, though I have some knowledge of *him*. How he came here I am ignorant; but this, madam, I will now tell you—though whether it will alter your determination of revenge against him or me, I know not. Captain Somerville is your nephew—my father's and your husband's name was Somerville.'

"The Princess fell back a pace or two, livid with rage; while, starting forward, I exclaimed, in a tone of profound amazement—

"'What! can it be possible that you are the daughter of my long-lost uncle Somerville?'

"I took the weeping girl's hand in mine, but as I did so, Sambo and four Hindoo soldiers rushed into the room. The villainous negro made a rush at me, yelling hideously; but with a blow of my foot I sent him howling and rolling over and over on the floor. The Hindoos, with drawn knives, then darted on me, whilst the vindictive Princess, far from relenting in her fury, ordered them to seize or slay me. Claspings her hands in agony, Marian Somerville implored me to surrender, for I had grasped my bar with the determination of resisting to death.

"'In God's name, Captain Somerville, let me not endure the agony of seeing you murdered before my eyes. 'Tis I have done this by heedlessly stating a fact I only knew three days ago.'

"'And dearly, miserable wretch, shall you pay for your information,' bitterly exclaimed the Begum, as several more Hindoos entered the room.

"In either disgust or passion, I flung the bar from me, and allowed myself to be led from the room, saying to my new-found cousin—

"'Trust to Providence, Marian. This unnatural woman dares not do that which her passion prompts her to threaten.'

"'Dares not,' echoed the Begum, with a mocking laugh, as I retired. 'You shall see what a Mahratta Princess dares to do.'

"In a frame of mind not to be described, I was con-

ducted back to my chamber. Two immense staples were driven into the wall, and two monsters of padlocks put outside. As soon as it was daylight next morning—for the black villain left me no light—I took out the folded paper my unfortunate cousin had given me.

“But I must here, if I have not already wearied you, give you a slight sketch of our family history.

“We are originally from Devonshire. My father and uncle were brothers. My father, the eldest, inherited the property, which was very considerable, his brother receiving a very handsome portion. My uncle Edward, from his earliest youth, was of a strange, eccentric disposition. Being remarkable for a handsome face and figure, he was courted in every place, especially as he added to the above qualifications a most agreeable disposition and temper. At one or two and twenty, he took it into his head to go on a sporting expedition into the far west of America, and did not return for four years. My father was married to a lady of birth and fortune, when he returned. My uncle was too restless to remain long quiet. He declared he would go to India, and have a campaign as a volunteer amongst the wild tribes of Hindostan.

“My father did all he could to persuade him to marry and settle down quietly near him, for the brothers were much attached to each other; but my uncle only laughed, saying he was too restless and wild for matrimony; and shortly after he went into Cornwall, with a couple of friends, sportsmen, to spend a few months. At Truro he beheld, at a race ball, the beautiful Marian Trevors, only daughter of one of the proudest land-holders in Cornwall. The young lady was a wealthy heiress, for she inherited the great opulence of her maternal uncle, St. Buryans.

“The singularly handsome person, and lively engaging manners, of Edward Somerville, won the love of the heiress of St. Buryans.

“But her proud father scornfully refused to listen to the proposals of a younger brother; the consequence was,

they eloped, were pursued by the enraged father, and overtaken on the borders of Devon. An unfortunate scuffle ensued; a pistol presented by my uncle to intimidate the servants, who attempted to drag Marian Trevors (who had happily fainted) from the chariot, went off, and shot Mr. Trevors through the heart, he having, unluckily, at the moment advanced to the door.

"Horror-stricken at the catastrophe, the domestics raised their unfortunate master, while my uncle, distracted at the calamity of which he was the unintentional cause, pursued his flight with his insensible partner. Marian happily remained ignorant of her father's fate. They crossed from Plymouth to Jersey, and there were married, and from thence passed into Germany.

"My father did not hear from my uncle for several months after his arrival in Cologne. He then wrote to him, stating he would never claim the property of St. Buryans—nor would he ever return to England. It was his intention, he said, to go out to Madras. He feared every moment some chance circumstance might reveal her father's unfortunate death to his beloved wife.

"Another year passed over, when my father received a letter from his brother, bidding him and Europe farewell for ever. He had lost his wife in giving birth to a little girl, which he named Marian.

"My father wrote and did all he could to console my uncle, and persuade him, for the sake of his child—who was undoubted heiress to the united estate of St. Buryans and Trevors—to remain in Europe; but he never received a reply; and from that hour he heard no more of his brother. Whether he reached India, with his child, or perished on the voyage, he could never learn.

"As a younger son, I went into the army; and, before sailing for India, my father made me acquainted with the facts I have just stated. "Perhaps," said he, "by an extraordinary change, you may gain some tidings of your uncle." I made every inquiry I could from the period of my arrival in India, but failed in getting the slightest

clue by which I could hope to ascertain whether he reached India or not.

"You can thus imagine my extreme astonishment at discovering my cousin Marian in the extraordinary manner I have related; and to find, in the Princess Onjein, an aunt, and an implacable and bitter enemy.

"As soon as I could see to read, I took the paper Marian had given me; and opening it, eagerly perused the few lines it contained. It ran thus:—

" 'Trusting to Providence, and the kind intentions of a poor Hindoo girl—one of the Begum's slaves—I lived in the hope of getting this paper conveyed to you. From this poor female slave, who has always evinced a strong attachment to me, I learned that your name was Somerville, and that you were an officer in the — Dragoons.

" 'Two years ago, on my unfortunate father's death-bed, he declared to me that he had a nephew just arrived in India, in the — Dragoons; and that, had not death cut short his career so suddenly, he intended writing to you, and declaring his relationship. Alas! he had no time to say more; neither is time afforded to me for explanation. In the writing desk the Princess sent you, and which belonged to my poor father, you will find two secret recesses, containing papers, which will explain all to you. If you cannot discover the springs, break the desk. You may escape from the power of this dreadful woman; if so, oh! in mercy, recollect that your ill-fated cousin, Marian Somerville, is left exposed to the unrelenting persecutions of one, whose cruelty and vindictiveness are not to be surpassed.

" 'God grant that you may escape. If so, to you I look for deliverance from my miserable captivity.

"Your unfortunate cousin.

"MARIAN SOMERVILLE."

"So, here at last," I said to myself, 'is my cousin Marian; and I, like her, am a captive—without a pros-

pect of being able either to effect her deliverance, or my own."

"Anxious to examine the papers in the desk, I commenced taking it asunder. Accustomed to the mode in which such desks are manufactured in England, I discovered, after half an hour's scrutiny, the springs of the two secret recesses. The first contained, wrapt tightly in cotton, without frames, two beautifully executed portraits of my uncle Edward and his wife Marian Trevors. She must have been exquisitely beautiful; and a finer, or more intellectual face it was scarcely possible to see, than that of Edward Somerville.

"For several moments I gazed upon the portraits, with an intense feeling of melancholy. The originals were no longer in life. One perished in the very flower of youth; the other in the prime of manhood—struck down, I greatly feared, treacherously; breathing his last sigh in a foreign land, and leaving his only child to an unknown destiny, under the rule of a fiendish woman.

"These were painful thoughts; and with a heavy sigh, I continued my examination. In the same drawer with the portrait, were several valuable rings, diamond earrings, and bracelets of great price. All these I secured about my person, determined to part with them only with life.

"I next opened the false bottom, which contained several sheets of paper, closely written;—videlicet, the certificate of his marriage—his child's birth—with references of time, place, person, &c., should it be requisite at any period to establish her claims to the property, &c. Besides these, was an order upon a Bank established in Bombay, for a large sum of rupees, equal to £10,000 sterling, lodged in the name of Marian Somerville, and payable to her signature or order.

"I perused the papers before me; which, I perceived were headed—'Some brief account of my life from the period of my landing in India.' It will, however, be quite sufficient for me to mention only the event that led to his union with the Princess Onjein.

"It appears that my uncle suffered severely at heart, from the period when his wife's father fell slain by the pistol shot from his hand. This had an effect on his whole after life, depressing his spirits, at times, fearfully. The death of his wife completely shattered his mind. From Antwerp, he sailed with his little girl, then two years old, for Bombay; taking with him a respectable widow, to whom was confided the charge of his little girl. After his wife's death, he went by the name of Somers; or he seemed to have a morbid fear of being recognised as the Somerville who shot Mr. Trevors—though it was very well known, in his native place, that the unfortunate Mr. Trevors met his death by accident; for the domestics, with whom the scuffle commenced, were aware that it was more owing to the officious interference of Mr. Trevors that the pistol went off, than otherwise; and the man had the honesty to say so before a jury. He reached Bombay in safety; and lodged the entire of his fortune in a Banking Company there, in his daughter's real name.

"Bombay was one of the presidencies belonging to the East India Company. Here, unfortunately, the child's nurse died; but my uncle succeeded in placing her under the charge of a most respectable lady, of the name of Freeling. By the death of her husband, who held an official situation under the company, this lady suffered much pecuniary difficulty. Generous and kind by nature, Edward Somerville, through his little girl's medium, restored Mrs. Freeling to some degree of independence and comfort. She was a highly educated woman, and undertook the care and tuition of the beautiful child confided to her care, with the same affection as she evinced for her own only child, also a girl, though some seven years older than the little Marian.

"Satisfied that his child was under the charge of a person who would be as a mother to her, he indulged in the restless, wandering life he had always loved; and called all the strong energies and passions of his nature

into play. The great Aurungzebe was, at this period, filling the continent of Hindostan with the renown of his exploits.

"Into Hindostan, my uncle went. After a year or so, spent in a strange way, he acquired a complete knowledge of the language; and becoming acquainted with a chieftain of rank, at Meerut, he joined him and fought under his banners in the wars of Aurungzebe. Years passed on, till, at length, in all but religion, my uncle became a complete Indian Chieftain; and, for some desperate exploit in taking a fortress, he received a robe of honour from Aurungzebe himself, with the title of Khan, and the command of a fine body of horse.

"Twelve years were passed in this manner, till chance made him acquainted with the Princess Onjein; then a widow, only two and thirty, and sovereign over a very extensive territory. Whether smitten by her beauty, or by her daring Amazonian disposition, or whether the Princess herself—of a most amorous disposition—was struck by his noble form, and handsome features, I know not. He merely said, in his short account of himself, that the Princess Onjein resigned her power into his hands, and they were married.

"The Princess possessed several forts of great strength, and a very handsome mansion in Onjein; a town situated in the province of Malwah. Marian was fifteen when my uncle set out for Bombay, to bring her to reside with him, in his place at Onjein.

"And here the narration of his life ended; for, at the bottom of the page, was the month and date of his daughter's arrival in Onjein.

"Having carefully secured all these papers within the lining of my shooting jacket, I pondered over my cousin's situation and my own."

CHAPTER IX.

CAPTAIN SOMERVILLE'S STORY CONCLUDED.

"LITTLE time was allowed me for deliberation. Scarcely had I swallowed my morning meal, when the negro, Sambo, and four Hindoos, with matchlocks and fuses burning in their hands, entered my room. The negro, with a savage grin on his hideous face, desired me to follow him into the presence of the Princess. To say 'Nay,' was out of the question; so, wondering what new scheme was in my aunt's brain, now that she could no longer regard me in a matrimonial light, and dreading, I knew not what, in regard to Marian, I followed my conductors into the Court of Jonquils, and through a passage which led into a chamber of considerable dimensions. At the further end, was the Princess Onjein, standing by the side of what appeared to me an open vault.

"As I approached, I could see in the features of my aunt, visibly portrayed, hatred, malice, and all the bad passions of the heart.

" 'Approach, Captain Somerville,' said she, in a bitter tone, and motioning for the soldiers to stand back; 'I promised you, when we met, that I should not forget you or your precious cousin. You said I dared not do that which I threatened; but a Mahratta Princess, when she wills, dares do anything. Look down into that cave. Your cousin is its inmate; and there she lies till the worms revel on her beauty.'

" 'Woman, what mean you?' I exclaimed, starting forward, my face and temples throbbing almost to bursting with passion. I stood on the brink of the cave; it seemed about fourteen feet deep, and half that in breadth. With profound horror and dismay, I beheld, seated on the

humid earth, my ill-fated cousin. Her face was buried in the folds of her shawl; but I could hear the deep sobs of agony that came from her bosom.

“‘Merciful God!’ I exclaimed; ‘can such fiendish malignity exist in the female bosom? Woman, without heart or feeling,’ I added, stepping nearer to her, ‘what is your intention in committing this infernal outrage upon an innocent and unoffending girl, even supposing she was an utter stranger, to say nothing of her being a relative?’

“A laugh of scorn and defiance burst from the lips of the princess. ‘I will tell you, proud Englishman, what my intention is. But first, learn my motives for my so acting. When I offered you my hand, I was really ignorant that the blood of the man I detested ran in your veins. When I married that girl’s father—an adventurer under the assumed name of Somers—I gave him wealth, power, territory; he was looked upon by my people in the light of a great Mahratta chief. I even received his daughter, by another wife, into my palace. How was I requitted for my generosity and condescension? Did not this man, whom I had raised to the rank of a prince, forget that I was the daughter of a great Mahratta chieftain? Scarcely two years married, when I discovered I was betrayed, neglected, despised. Curse on the hour that I have to say it—my blood tingles with the thought—I was neglected for a vile Persian slave—one who sat at my feet—who licked the dust from my footstool. I upbraided him with his conduct. He even had the cowardly meanness to lie, and say I was in error; but the villain dared not reply to my questions. I swore to be revenged—I swore an oath a Mahratta never breaks. Yes, I swore to be revenged—not after the manner of thy cold-blooded race, but after the fashion of the children of the Sun, whose blood flows like a stream of molten lava, which not even the ocean can quench. I vowed revenge upon him—his paramour—his entire race—if any of his accursed blood came within my power. He forgot

—fool that he was—that only as my husband, was he tolerated by my people. His very agents betrayed him; and again I had in my power the vile slave that dishonoured a Mahratta princess. And what think you, Englishman, was my revenge—upon mother and child?" There!"

And this fiendish woman stamped her foot, and pointed to the cave, while her eyes actually seemed to blaze with intense passion.

"There, in that cave," resumed she, after a short pause, "I had them put; and over that platform I had my couch placed; and for four days the music of their shrieks and groans, as they expired of hunger and thirst, caused me sweeter sleep than I ever enjoyed before or since."

"I was actually horror-struck—totally unable to get out a word. I felt the colour forsake my cheeks, and a sickening sensation creep through my frame. With a look of diabolical triumph, she fixed her gaze upon me, saying—

"'Was not that a vengeance worthy a child of the Sun? So much for the vile slave. Now for the master villain. He was with my regiment at Pooranpooor. I had him shot with a poisoned arrow; but he knew not who struck the blow till brought here; and when his last moment came, I told him how his paramour died, and that he owed his death to me.'

"'Oh! devil in a human form!' I almost shouted, so terribly excited did I become. 'Enough of this. A day of reckoning has come!'

"I saw her wave her hand, and the negro coming forward as if to close the door on the cave, I felled him to the floor with a blow, and snatching the long dagger he wore from his belt, with a bound I was beside the startled princess, and caught her in my grasp. I grasped her as in a vice. I was like a madman from passion; and as the Hindoos were rushing on me, I held the dagger to the princess's throat, and swore—God forgive me!—a fearful oath, that I would slay her if her soldiers moved

a step nearer ; at the same time, shouting to the soldiers in Hindostanee, "Stand back, or your princess dies!"

"'Fools! idiots!' screamed the Begum, 'stand back, or this madman will slay me.'

"'Swear then,' I exclaimed, 'by the most sacred oath a Hindoo or Mahomedan can take, to release that unfortunate maiden and restore her to British protection. For myself I ask nothing. Wreak your unnatural vengeance upon me. I have nerves to bear it; but either swear to spare her or die!'

"'Madman, I will swear—'

"Just at that moment a party of armed Mussulmen soldiers entered the room. At their head was the splendidly-armed warrior I had seen on my first interview.

"'How is this, Captain Somerville?' said the chieftain, halting on the brink of the cave, and looking down, with a start of shame and horror on his fine features. 'Princess, princess, in the name of God, what is this I see?'

"'You here, Hyder Ali!' bitterly exclaimed the Begum. 'Do you not see my life is at stake in the hands of this madman?'

"'Swear then, madam,' I joyfully said—for now that the warrior's head was covered only with a turban, I recognized his remarkable features at once; and in Hyder Ali, I beheld the Mirabout. 'Swear to release that ill-treated maiden, and you are free.'

"'Bring hither a ladder,' fiercely exclaimed Hyder Ali to Sambo. 'The daughter of my old comrade must not, princess, if we part for ever, suffer this gross indignity.'

"Releasing the Princess, on her swearing the most solemn oath a Mahomedan can take, I seized the ladder the negro held, and, placing it, descended into the cave, leaving the enraged princess and Hyder Ali conversing in a low voice.

"'My poor girl, what must you have suffered!' said I

my cousin, as I raised her in my arms, and bore her from that detested dungeon.'

"'Alas, Captain Somerville,' said she, in a low voice, 'I have sacrificed you to save myself.'

"'Not so, Marian,' I said, in a low voice, as we reached the top, 'in Hyder Ali, I have a sure friend, or not. I will have you sent to Meerut, where the English resident, Mr. Howard, will receive you into his family, till, please God, I can join you, and restore you to your nearest relative, my father.'

"As I placed Marian on the floor, the Princess advanced towards us, with features so distorted by baleful passions, scarcely to retain the appearance of a human face. With a look of withering hate, she regarded us for a moment, and then said—

"'I have sworn to spare that girl. Be it so; but *you*—I would rather perish than forego my vengeance against *you*.'

"'Madam,' I replied, 'I am quite satisfied to abide the worst storm of your hate. My cousin, Marian Somerville, must be conducted in safety to Meerut, and consigned to the care of the British resident, Mr. Howard.'

"'And do you imagine, madman, or fool,' replied she, 'that a Mahratta princess is to become the dupe of such as you? You think to secure your own release by sending your precious cousin to betray the place of your captivity.'

"'You wrong me, madam,' I calmly replied. 'Such was not my intention. It will not be at all necessary or Miss Somerville to mention my name.' Here Marian clasped her little hands, looking at me, with eyes full of tears. 'I will answer for it, she will never betray you.'

"Before the Begum could reply, Hyder Ali stepped forward, saying, in Hindostanee, in a slow, calm voice—

"I, Princess, will answer for this lady's silence; and I will send a confidential officer to conduct her at once to Meerut. Lady,' he continued, addressing Marian,

‘I was your father’s friend for several years. Give me your promise to keep silence respecting all that has occurred here, and in less than an hour you shall depart well escorted for Meerut.’

“‘Hyder Ali,’ replied my cousin, regaining with an effort the natural spirit and energy of her nature, ‘can you, with your noble heart—for I have often heard my poor father speak of you—can you ask his daughter to commit so base an act to save herself? No, princess,’ she added, almost haughtily, turning to the Begum, and looking her steadily in the face, ‘if you have the heart to exercise your vengeance upon those who never injured you, let me be the victim. You accused my unfortunate father of a crime which he never committed. The wretched victim of your cruelty and jealousy was the wife of Golaum Reza, who, happily for himself, before he learned the fearful fate of his wife and child, fell in storming Pooranpoor.’

“‘Wretch! what lies are these you cast into my face?’ exclaimed the Begum, livid with rage, or some internal feeling of remorse.

“‘Spare your names, Madam,’ returned Marian, firmly; ‘there stands Hyder Ali Khan, who knows I speak the truth.’

“‘Aleikoom-i-Salaam. Let it be peace,’ said Hyder Ali Khan, advancing before the princess. ‘The maiden speaks the truth. God is great! Allah-ill-ullah! When the victims had perished, it was too late to explain. But Golaum Reza was a good and faithful servant.’

“The princess stood like one bewildered and confounded.

“‘Let there be an end of this,’ said she, impatiently. ‘Take that girl, Khan, where you please, so she goes where she may never cross my path. Accursed was the hour I ever beheld one of her polluted race. Go!’

“Hyder Ali motioned with his hand to a young officer standing at the further end of the chamber with the Begum’s guards, who immediately advanced.

“‘See that a palanquin, and proper bearers be at once ready to convey this lady to Meerut,’ said Hyderi, ‘and do you and ten of my own men be ready to send it. I will give you full directions before depart.’”

“The officer, with a low salaam, departed.

“While Hyder was speaking, I kept my eyes fixed on the princess. I could see that her breast was agitated by a violent struggle; her dark eyes, at times, shined fiercely, and then, again she bent them on the ground. At length the bad passions that too often ruled her, were subdued. She advanced close to me, as I stood gently imploring my cousin to depart without further opposition to the will of the Begum.

“‘Captain Somerville,’ she began, speaking slowly and mildly, ‘much of all the evil that has been done might have been avoided, had not others practised deception. That is past, is past—’tis our destiny—God is great! Mahratta princess can forgive as well as punish. You have saved my life. Go! Take yours in return. Let the remembrance of what has passed be in the recesses of your own bosom. You are free.’”

“Turning quickly round, she passed out through a side-door, without bestowing a look upon any of us, who stood bewildered by so sudden and happy termination of a horrible scene.

“‘Allah, illa-ill-ullah! She is a noble princess after all. There is but one God, and Mahomet is His prophet,’ solemnly uttered Hyder, bowing his head reverently in the direction of Mecca. ‘This is well, come, Sahib,’ continued he. ‘The goodness of God is finite. You are free; and can accompany your cousin to Meerut. I, myself, will escort you to Minadabad.’”

“My story is already too long to dwell on details. In less than an hour, Marian, in a state of bewildered anxiety, was placed in a palanquin; while, mounted by orders of Hyder upon a noble Arab, I rode by the side, escorted by eight or ten armed riders.

"I cast a look at the gloomy fortress, as we passed out through its ponderous gates, returning thanks to Providence for our most unexpected escape. The building, which was extensive and very strongly fortified, stood on a slight elevation, in a tolerably well cultivated and picturesque country. As I rode by the side of Hyder Ali Khan, for such was his rank, he requested me to give him a brief sketch of my uncle's life—stating the reason he assumed the name of Somers. I then cautiously touched upon the past, requesting him to explain to me why he, who had acted with such generosity towards me, had previously, in the disguise of a Santon, attempted my life—as he said such was his intention. A very painful expression passed across the Khan's countenance. After a moment, he looked up—saying, as usual with Mussulmen—

"God is good. What is to be, is to be. It is fate. Listen. Some years ago—I was a Golaum in the service of the great Aurungzebe. Descended from an ancient and impoverished race, I rose rapidly, by my services under that great monarch, and finally was created Khan, and ruler over a fine province. Your uncle, Somers Khan, and I, became acquainted; for he also rose in rank, under the Emperor. The Princess Onjein was the cause of our separation; for before that fickle princess saw your uncle, she had listened to my addresses. When she married your uncle, in disgust, and, I confess it, vexed at heart—for I loved this woman with as strong a passion as ever beat in the breast of man—I retired to my province; and till I heard of his death two years after his marriage, I never saw the princess, though her territories adjoin mine. After that event, she contrived to renew our intimacy. I again became infatuated; and, in short, yielded to her wishes in everything. I joined my force to hers in the late war, and fully expected, at the expiration, to become her husband. Judge my astonishment and rage, when I found that she had actually offered her hand to a British officer of the name of

Somerville, a captain in the — Dragoons. I was at that time in Delhi, the death of the great Aurungzebe having created some confusion in the election of Chief. My rage was beyond control when I heard of this wantonness of the Princess, and in an evil hour, a prey to jealousy and rage, I resolved to remove you out of my path with my dagger. God is great! I was punished. You saved my life by your kind attention to my sufferings. From a faithful slave in the service of the Begum, before set out disguised in the attire of a Santon, I learned that the princess intended to carry you off while hunting in the valley of Dhoon—I warned you; but you did not heed what I said. Immediately after that, I was forced to proceed to Delhi. When I returned, you were in the fortress of the Princess. Nevertheless, I was forced to proceed to Puna, owing to the Rajah of D—— making an inroad into the territory of the princess. I had not the least idea she would proceed to such extremities during the short time I was absent. The intelligence of this rupture with the Rajah was brought by the young Termina you beheld on your first interview with the princess. I had just arrived in time to prevent a frightful crime on her part, and a useless sacrifice on yours; for had you slain the Begum in the delirium of passion, you would have been cut to pieces by her followers, and your cousin left at the mercy of the Begum's infuriated soldiers."

"Such was the subject of the communication made to me by Hyder Ali Khan. We reached Minadabad in safety—and there I parted from the Mussulman Chief.

"'As a remembrance of Hyder Ali,' said the warrior, in parting, 'accept the steed you ride. She is of the very best blood the Deccan can boast; and matchless for beauty and speed.'

"In truth she was a superb animal, and a gift worthy of a Prince; for it is well known how highly the chieftains of the Deccan prize their Arab mares. At Minadabad, I could hire bearers and a palanquin, and the country from

thence to Meerut was in perfect tranquillity. My cousin and I parted with the generous Hyder with deep feelings of gratitude on our part, and warm wishes for our welfare on his.

“Having procured two female Hindoo attendants for Marian, we resumed our journey to Meerut, which occupied only one day and night. During the journey, I had little opportunity of conversing with my cousin, for the heat was oppressive and almost insupportable; but we reached our destination in safety. Mr. and Mrs. Howard received Marian with the greatest kindness. My appearance caused no little wonder, for it was generally thought I had been either murdered or was held captive by the Mahairs. Great rewards had been offered by the Colonel of my regiment, and great exertion was made, but in vain, to trace my captors. I found my regiment at Madras. The war being at an end for a time, I wrote to my Colonel, and requested leave of absence for a month, stating it was my intention to sell out, having received letters from my father requesting me to return home, as he was very uneasy at my elder brother’s situation; a fall from his horse having caused the bursting of a blood-vessel.

“However, to conclude my tale, I fell desperately in love with my cousin Marian, during the month I remained at Meerut, and I need not say my affection was returned. Shortly after, I sold out; and, having prevailed on Marian—powerfully seconded by Mr. and Mrs. Howard’s advice—to become mine, we were soon married; and a month afterwards set out for Madras, and sailed for England in the first homeward-bound ship.

“My father’s astonishment and joy was, in truth, great, when I presented to him at the same time my wife and his niece.

“I found but little difficulty in establishing Marian’s claims to the St. Buryans estates. The papers I possessed were not to be put aside; and though, at first, some opposition was made, it was finally abandoned on the arriva

f Mrs. Freeling in England, whose evidence as to Marian's lenty was conclusive.

"Before leaving Madras, I had obtained the money odged by my uncle for the benefit of his daughter. My rotherquite recovered from his accident. About four years go, I purchased this property, to which we are both very artial, though we sometimes spend a few months at St. buryans.

"About five years after my return to England, I heard rom Major Delmar that Hyder Ali and the Princess Onjein were married, and that Hyder, at the head of a owerful army, had invaded the Provinces of Coimbetoor, Malabar, and Canara, and finally usurped the thrown of Mysore, and established his capital in Seringapatam.*

"We must not, however, judge the Princess Onjein nd the usurper of Mysore by contrasting them with the natives of civilized Europe. Their fiery deeds and wild, unchecked impulses are more akin to their burning clime, nd benighted religion, and will not stand the test of European judgment. Let us, however, hope that time nd a better and nearer intercourse with the more civilized nd polished natives of Europe, will effect a great and eneficial change in their religious feelings and actions.

"Had Captain Somerville lived in our time, he might ave quoted Byron—

"'Tis the clime of the East, 'tis the land of the sun ;
Can he smile on the deeds his children have done ?

* I trust the indulgent reader will excuse a romance-writer in anticipating this event by a few years. Hyder Ali—a Mussulman—*did* usurp the throne of Mysore : he was succeeded by the famous Tippoo Sultaun.

CHAPTER X.

ON one of those days so common in our variable climate in the latter end of June, sultry, misty, and very much inclined to rain hard, but keeping up a gentle drizzling instead, Gerald Granville and his only attendant, Dennis O'Regan, were pursuing their journey from Deer Hurst to London; grooms, with horses, &c., for service, having left three days previously.

Gerald rode a splendid horse, a grandson of Captain Somerville's famous Arab, Beda. In those days, gentlemen and their servants rode well armed, for that period was the "*beau jour*" of "gentlemen of the road." Houses of entertainment were few and far between; and the roads themselves in many parts detestable. The celebrated Turpin, and several other equally noted highwaymen flourished at the time, in great glory and renown, defeating, for a considerable period, the strong arm of the law. Gerald was to embark in what was then called a fine ship, a transport, lying in Deptford Reach. She was carrying out stores, ammunition, and part of the regiment of the —— Dragoons to join the great Duke of Marlborough. Her destination was the Hague, where the Duke remained for a time to confer with Prince Eugene, the Pensionary Heinsius, and the deputies of the States-General.

In those old times of travellers and travelling it required no less than three days to journey on horseback from Oxford to London. The first day's journey had passed without anything unusual. They slept at a road-side inn, resuming their journey on the following day, and passing through a small village, where they refreshed their steeds. They continued on, intending to sleep at a well-known hostel, about twenty-two miles from London.

The evening was anything but an agreeable one: the sky was gloomy and overcast; the atmosphere sultry and suffocating, though a thick, drizzling rain commenced shortly after their leaving the village. Gerald, nevertheless, proceeded at a slow pace: his horse had lost a shoe, and a bungling farrier had driven a nail badly. The consequence was, that the noble animal put his foot to the ground tenderly.

The travellers had reached to within two or three miles of their destination for the night, when two horsemen from a cross road came suddenly upon them, and rode up along-side; one of the horsemen saying in a rough, strong voice—

“Rather a dampish evening, Master, for slow riding.”

The moment he perceived the horseman close with his master, O'Regan rode up to within a few yards.

Gerald looked at the speaker, as he replied in a cold tone, that it was rather a gloomy evening, but he had seen worse, and felt no inclination to hurry himself.

The man who had spoken was a tall, strong-built fellow, with heavy riding-boots, thick overcoat, and a three-cornered hat, common enough at that period, with a silver buckle and strap in front. There was nothing remarkable in the man's face; but it would be difficult to say what he was. He was armed, with both swords and pistol-holsters on his horse. At all events, Gerald felt satisfied that he was not a gentleman, though he rode a very fine animal. His companion, who was neither so tall nor so stout, rode a bay horse with every appearance of having great speed in him, if required, but his features were so concealed by thick wrappers as to be quite indistinguishable.

“You ride a very noble beast, master,” said the same horseman who had spoken first; “but he seems tender-footed. I guess some bungling farrier on the road has lamed him. I'll warrant he's a mortal fast one, Joe,” added he, turning to his companion.

"What's the use of his qualities?" growled the other; "he won't have a leg to stand on to-morrow."

"Upon my honour, sir," said Gerald haughtily, turning round, and facing the man, "you make yourself quite at home in your remarks upon my horse. You will please not to confine your pace to mine, as I have no desire whatever for your company."

"No offence, master—no offence I hope," replied the man, suddenly checking his horse. As he did so, a loud, shrill whistle rang through the air with a piercing sound.

"D——n!" exclaimed both the strangers, in an excited tone; and, clapping spurs to their steeds, they rode off rapidly, a turn in the road shutting them from our travellers' sight. They could, however, hear the tramp of their horses' heels as they galloped over the ground.

Gerald quietly returned to its place the pistol he had taken from its holster; while Dennis exclaimed with a loud laugh—

"Faix, sir, if them wasn't a brace of rapparees, I'm no Irishman. Musha! I had half a mind to pepper the big one when he turned round on you; only I knew you are so handy with the barkers yourself, your honour, and there were only the two of 'em."

"Well," returned Gerald, "I think they were a pair of highwaymen, Dennis. That whistle was from some confederate, and alarmed them. I saw the fellow, as he checked his horse, lay his hand upon his pistol-holsters, and I did the same. Let us ride on: we are not more than a couple of miles from the hostel."

In less than half an hour, just as the rain increased to a downright pour and the shades of night were falling around, they entered the wide court-yard of a road-side inn, well known in that day as the best for many a mile between Oxford and London. It was a very old, rambling sort of building, with all kinds of gable ends, curious chimneys, and great wooden balconies to the windows, with an enormous porch to the door, at which stood the fat, jovial landlord of the Queen's Arms.

In the court-yard stood one of those strange, lumbering vehicles on massive springs and broad leather suspenders, with wheels and axle-trees of incalculable strength and clumsiness. This machine, dignified in those days with the name of chariot—a vehicle used only by the aristocracy—had evidently just arrived at the inn. Two men-servants were taking from the inside various articles of luggage belonging to females; and a very smart damsel was actively employing her hands, and, indeed, that useful member, her tongue, in receiving some of the packages, and in scolding the men for their rough handling of them.

As Gerald dismounted, he cast a glance at these proceedings. The landlord welcomed his guest with a glad smile, for Gerald had stopped there many times before in early youth with the Baronet.

"Who are your guests, Master Oldham?" inquired young Granville. "I think I know the livery."

"A nice and a handsome dame and her daughter, a very young girl, Master Granville," replied the host. "You may have heard of her down about your part of the country. She is the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone, a widow, and more's the pity," added Oldham, as he ushered his guest into a comfortable sitting room. "But hadn't you better take a glass of warmed ale with some spice in it, and change your habits? You are wet."

"I will take the spiced ale, Oldham," replied Gerald; "but my cloak saved my inner garments. Let me have some supper. By-the-by, I have heard that name of Atherstone. The lady, I think, was on a visit at Lord Althorp's."

"Right, Master Granville, you are right," rejoined the host; "she came from there, and goes on to-morrow to London. Did you pass on the way half-a-dozen troopers, with a cornet in command?"

"No, I did not. Why, Oldham?"

"Why, they are scouring the country for the famous Dick Turpin, who has been robbing his worship, Squire

Delmar, our country magistrate, who sent out these men from Barnet after him."

"Ha! that's often the case," said Gerald, laughing. "I think I had the pleasure of meeting this worthy, and very likely should have had a sample of his dexterity had not some confidant at a distance seen these troopers."

The landlord listened to Gerald's description of the two horsemen.

"Yes," said he; "not a doubt of it. One of them was Turpin. I am rejoiced there was no occasion to draw in defence of your purse. You are a powerful man, Master Granville, and they say the best shot in the county, or in any other county, for aught I know; but that Dick Turpin is a devil when roused. It's better as it is, far better. Let the troopers catch him—they are paid for it—it's their trade. But I will go and send up the spiced ale, and the supper."

Our hero made a remarkably good meal; the god of love had not yet interfered with his digestion; he, moreover, drank a very tolerably fair proportion of good claret—a thing you could get good at a roadside inn in those days, when teetotalism was totally unknown.

Gerald sat up till he was tired of doing nothing, except, indeed, exchanging a few civil words with the pretty waiting-maid of the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone, who chanced to pass him rather frequently in the long, rambling old gallery, into which almost all the sleeping-rooms in the hostel opened. At the extremity of this corridor was a stained glass window, opening out into a massive wooden balcony, over a rather extensive garden, at the bottom of which ran the noble Thames.

"Try and open that window, Dennis," said Gerald to his worthy valet, as he threw himself into bed; "it's marvellously sultry and hot—there's no air."

"Bad cess to them," said Dennis, failing to open the window; "I believe they never intended it should open, or it's crazy with age and stiff joints."

"Never mind," said Gerald; "do not close the door;

the people are all gone to rest except ourselves. By-the-bye, did you get a farrier to take off that shoe from Sultan?"

"The first thing I did, sir," replied Dennis. "The other rascal might have lamed the poor beast for a time. He will be quite well to-morrow."

So saying Master Dennis retired to his own roost. The night was in truth exceedingly sultry—not a breath of air was stirring; the rain had ceased, but a thick, unwholesome mist lay on the face of the country.

Gerald Granville slept—how long he knew not; but he was awakened by the glare of some strong light across his face. He opened his eyes, and, naturally enough, looked up; but the sight caused him to doubt whether he had awakened, or was still sleeping and dreaming.

There were neither curtains or canopy to the couch he reposed on; and standing close to the bed was a slight figure, vested in long, flowing robes of white. It held in its hand a small antique lamp. The eyes of the figure were wide open, and fixed, not upon him, but as if something else attracted them.

In an instant Gerald's thoughts and ideas were roused, and then he saw that his unknown visitor was fast asleep.

She remained thus motionless for a minute; but, during that brief period, Gerald, as he gazed earnestly into that pale, young face, saw that the figure was that of a young girl not more than thirteen or fourteen years of age. Though pale—exceedingly pale—the features were exquisitely lovely; the eyes were of a deep, a "holy blue," and the ringlets that hung disordered over the neck and shoulders were of raven hue. Altogether, there was a childish beauty in the innocently expressive face before him, charming to a degree.

He scarcely breathed. We have said the girl rested in a motionless attitude for about a minute; a slight smile parted the lips, and she lifted her arm in an attitude of attention; then moved gently on, placed the lamp on the table, and went to the window.

Silently and rapidly Gerald threw his dressing-gown over him, just as the young girl turned from a fruitless attempt to open the window, took up her lamp, and passed silently and slowly from the room.

Guessing, from the elegance and neatness of the night-dress the girl wore, that she must be the daughter of Mrs. Atherstone, Gerald followed, treading softly, fearing to waken her, and yet dreading she might come to some harm.

All was profoundly still as he followed the young somnambulist along the corridor. She put her hand to several doors, but they were closed. She was now close to the glass doors leading out to the balcony—and, whether purposely or not, they were partly open. She laid the lamp on a marble slab holding flowers, and, pushing back the door, walked out. For an instant Gerald lost sight of her—the next, a wild and piercing shriek rang through the air. Dashing through the doors, he beheld the girl in the arms of a man. Two others were climbing over the wooden balcony by means of a rope ladder.

"Devils and furies!" ejaculated the man, about to drop the girl, "what is this?"

But Gerald, quick in thought and rapid in execution, caught the insensible sleep-walker in his arms, and, before the man could well help himself, he struck him with his right hand, a blow that felled him against the crazy wooden palings of the balcony.

"Curse him—shoot him!" roared the man, as he rolled over.

And the next instant Gerald felt himself hit in the left arm by a pistol shot. All this was the work of a single instant. Bearing the girl in his arms, he rushed back into the corridor. With a savage execration, the fallen man gained his feet, and, with the other two, threw himself over the balcony into the garden; for the inmates of the house were by this time roused, both by the shriek of the young girl and the loud report of the pistol.

As Gerald re-entered the corridor, a lady, covered with a mantle, hastily thrown on, followed by two female attendants, by no means particular in their hasty toilet, rushed forward to meet him. Hurrying up the great stairs, came several men, followed by the fat landlord, puffing and blowing, in the scanty garments he had been able, only partly, to assume. At their head, was O'Regan, with a brace of pistols in his hands.

"Search the gardens. Go; be active!" exclaimed Gerald, in a loud voice. "There are thieves about the house."

With a distracted, bewildered air—in fact, half dead with fright and agony of mind—the lady, who was Mrs. Atherstone, rushed to meet Gerald, exclaiming—

"My God, my child! Insensible! What—what is the meaning of all this? Merciful heavens! she is covered with blood!"

"It is mine, madam; be not alarmed," said Gerald; resigning the young girl to the care of her mother and attendants, who, without another word, hurried into one of the rooms in the corridor.

The men had all rushed down stairs, excepting the fat host, who seemed stupified.

"Mr. Granville—Mr. Granville, you are bleeding!" he at length exclaimed. "Let me see where you are hit. Oh! dear, dear, I am quite bewildered—knocked all of a heap."

At that moment, back came O'Regan; and seeing, by the light of a lamp, that his master's dressing gown was stained with blood, he became excessively alarmed.

"It's a mere scratch in the left shoulder," said Gerald, entering his room. "Did you catch any of the rascals?"

"Musha, devil take them! They got clean off; but they made a tolerable sweep of it. Be gorra, I'm bothered entirely. They tied and gagged the two ostlers; broke open the coach-house, and have ripped to baby rags the huge trunks and boxes strapped in the carriage. They had saddled your horse and mine, with (curse their

impudence) the intention of taking them off. But, *faix*, I'm in the clouds, it's such a mystery, altogether. What brought your honour out — begging your pardon — with the young lady in your arms? How the dickens did she get out of her mother's room? Ha!" he continued muttering, as he stripped his master's shoulder, "the Virgin be praised, it's a mere nothing! A cloth and a little cold water, Mr. Oldham—that's all that's wanting, and a strip of linen; and, by the powers, we shall be as well as ever."

Gerald explained the whole affair to the astonished landlord. O'Regan rubbed his head, uttering sundry ejaculations.

As day-light was on the point of breaking, our hero proposed to his worthy host, as his hurt was not of the slightest consequence, that he should retire, and leave him to take an hour's rest or so; it being much too early for starting, and he should wish to see the ladies before setting out.

Sleep, our hero certainly did not; for the events of the night left him so much subject for thought, that he lay pondering over the whole affair, and thinking in his mind what a lovely creature the fair somnambulist would make in three or four years—always provided she lost that dangerous habit of abandoning her couch during the night.

Though the ball of the robber had inflicted a mere flesh-wound "*en passant*," Gerald, when he rose to dress the following morning, found his left arm rather stiff. However, with O'Regan's assistance, he accomplished his toilet.

"Do you know, sir," said Dennis, "I suspect our two queer customers of yesterday had a finger in the plunder last night. They say there were some valuable jewels, and a large sum of money, locked up in the trunk behind the carriage; and, now, what makes the affair clear to me, as a well-planned job, is, that one of the grooms—bad luck to him—the same that kept us drinking with him

last night—and lately hired by Mrs. Atherstone—is decamped with his horse.

“Ha! indeed?” said Gerald; “it’s plain enough, then. I had but a short glance, in the imperfect light, at the fellow I knocked down; but I feel certain he was the same man who accosted me on the road yesterday.”

Just then the landlord of the Queen’s Arms entered—

“Master Granville, I am glad to see you looking so well. come with a message from the honourable lady, who is awaiting breakfast for your worship. She sends her compliments, and hopes you will take morning repast with her. She says she knows you very well by name. Lord bless me!” continued the worthy host, “she takes her loss of money and jewels as easy as I would a gallon of good ale. All she cares for is her dear young daughter.”

Anxious to pay his respects to Mrs. Atherstone, Gerald cut short his loquacious landlord by requesting to be shown the way to the breakfast-room.

On entering a large, old-fashioned saloon, whose wide windows looked out upon the Thames, and the very picturesque scenery on its opposite bank, Gerald was met by the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone. Our hero was at once struck with the elegant and graceful manner of his hostess, who frankly and kindly held out her hand, saying—

“You must have thought me, my dear sir, a most ungrateful as well as uncourteous dame last night. Not one word of thanks could I express, so confounded and bewildered did I become by the suddenness and strangeness of the adventure, which is still wrapt in mystery to me. Come here, Aleen, you are too young to be blushing and hiding your little head. You are but a naughty child after all, so come and thank Mr. Granville for the care he took of you in your land of dreams.”

With a cheerful smile, Aleen looked up, as she approached and held out her hand, and a fairy hand it was, saying—

“I was, indeed, mamma, a very naughty girl, and I trust Mr. Granville has not suffered from my infirmity;

for I heard he was hurt by the horrid man who first woke me by coming against me."

Wishing in his heart the fair girl before him was a few years older, Gerald took the little hand, and gaily drawing her towards him, kissed her cheek, saying—

"I owe you, fair Aleen, a great deal more than you owe me for last night's adventure; indeed, more perhaps than we all think."

"However," interrupted Mrs. Atherstone, "let us commence breakfast. I will then inquire a full account of the whole affair; and to complete our obligations to Mr. Gerald Granville, I will request of him that, as he is bound for London, he will take the rest of his journey in our company."

"Nothing could give me greater pleasure," said Gerald. "I am at your disposal as to time and service."

During breakfast, Mrs. Atherstone observed that she had met his uncle, Sir Hugh Granville, several times, latterly, at Lord Althorp's. Gerald was absent at the University at the time.

"I heard your uncle," she added, smiling, "speak in high terms of his nephew; but little thought how soon I was to become a judge of his merits."

Gerald bowed, and said he was, in truth, well rewarded by gaining such charming acquaintances.

"Well, now we have done complimenting each other," said the lady, gaily, "let me hear all about the affair. But, first of all, I must tell you how my little maid happened to get out; for, during the last two years, after a severe fever, following the measles, Aleen has frightened me excessively by rising in her sleep, and walking about the room. I thought it was an accidental thing; but it occurred afterwards so frequently, that I got alarmed. I then found it necessary to make her sleep in my chamber, or have an attendant in her own room, and to lock the door, and put away the key. Last night, somehow, they left the door without locking it; and the little wanderer got out. But where she went to, or when you first saw her, neither Aleen or myself know."

As Gerald explained, Aleen's sweet and innocent features became the colour of a rose.

"Well, indeed, indeed I owe you much more than I ever imagined."

"As I said before," resumed Gerald; "we owe you the greatest amount of thanks; for those robbers would unquestionably have robbed the house, and, perhaps, lives would have been lost in the end. I have since been thinking, my dear madam," continued Gerald, turning to Mrs. Atherstone, "that the heavy doors leading from the corridor into the balcony, were unbarred by some confederate—probably, the very man that absconded with your horses."

"I quite agree with you, Mr. Granville," responded Mrs. Atherstone, "and the more so as the casket of jewels which I am taking up to London to have re-set, was taken out of the trunk very late last night. You have heard, doubtless, that it was carried off with the rest of the articles stolen; but such was not the case, for it stood on a table in my room; and it makes me shudder when I think of it; for those robbers would undoubtedly have entered my room in search of it, as the man who has absconded was perfectly aware where it was deposited."

"I am delighted," observed Gerald, "that the rascals failed in their attempt upon the jewels. So you see, fair Aleen, your being in the land of dreams last night, was, at all events, fortunate."

"But nevertheless," said the young girl in a serious tone, "you might have lost your life by it. That horrid man that fired the pistol at you, might easily have killed you. What a frightful thing for me to have had on my mind a whole life long! I should never feel happy again."

"She is singularly lovely for a child," thought Gerald, as he made some gay reply.

Shortly after, having passed a very pleasant hour or so at breakfast, the whole party got ready, and in a short time were on the road to London.

A very pleasant morning succeeded the sultry night.

The thick fog had vanished, and a light, refreshing west wind swept the mist from the river's banks. The fine scenery from the hostel to London, winding at times along the gently-flowing, and silvery Thames, afforded the whole party a delightful day's travelling. The landlord of the Queen's Arms was sadly annoyed that the honourable dame would not hear of his sending for a magistrate and some constables to investigate and inquire into the robbery, and send out men in pursuit.

"On no account, my good Mr. Oldham," said Mrs. Atherstone; "what's lost, is lost. Investigation would be extremely painful to me. Let it rest as it is; for my loss is very trifling. Justice, some time or other, will overtake the offenders. But I do not wish to be an instrument in their punishment."

Late that evening the party reached London. Some portion of the way, Gerald rode inside the chariot, a vehicle quite roomy enough to carry a whole family, domestics and all.

With all the joyousness of early youth, Aleen soon became as familiar and happy with Gerald as with a brother. Our hero found her mother a most charming and agreeable woman, fascinating in manner and conversation, and scarcely as much as four-and-thirty years old. Her beauty was remarkable; and a strong resemblance existed between mother and daughter.

The carriage containing the party drew up at a handsome mansion in Marlborough Street, belonging to a very dear friend of Mrs. Atherstone: a Mrs. McMahon, an Irish lady of good connections, and wealthy. She also was a Londoner, but several years the senior of her friend.

Here Gerald took leave for the night, promising most faithfully to return the next day; and admonished by Mrs. Atherstone not to let the gaieties of the metropolis banish from his mind the recollections of his friends of the road.

Our hero, greatly pleased with his new friends, and

half in love with the fair somnambulist, notwithstanding her extreme youth, took up his quarters in a very well-known hotel in that day, namely, The Star and Garter, Piccadilly, facing St. James's Street.

CHAPTER XI.

THE following day, after a necessary visit to a surgeon, who dressed his wound, which had given him some slight degree of pain the preceding day, though he kept it to himself, he proceeded to make some inquiries as to when the Transport was to sail for the Hague. London was not new to Gerald, as he had spent several months there the year before. He had also several very distinguished acquaintances; but intending to sail immediately the Transport did, he refrained from seeking them out. He learned, however, that the "Royal Anne" would not sail for three or four days; and leaving O'Regan to see to the safe embarking of his horses and effects at the proper time, he resolved to spend those few days with Mrs. Atherstone and her daughter, by whom he was received with every mark of kind feeling. As to Aleen, she did not attempt to conceal the joy his presence caused her. O, happy period, of innocent youth! Who is there that does not look back on that period—not perhaps, with regret, but with a somewhat sad and mingled feeling? Aleen was innocence itself; and though a child in years, from a careful education, and the never absent companionship of her mother, she, at times, astonished our hero by the precocity of her thoughts, and the spirit of her conversation.

Now it appeared that "The Royal Anne" was extremely slow in her work of lading. More than a week had

elapsed ; and O'Regan growled at the delay, vowing that all the fighting would be over by the time she was ready for sailing.

"Three days more, my hearty," said the first mate, slapping the impatient Hibernian on the back, "and you'll be casting all the good things you have been stowing away in your hold to the fishes."

Now that was precisely what Dennis O'Regan dreaded. Knowing what a martyr he was to that unrelenting enemy, sea sickness, and wishing devoutly that there was a bridge from Dover to Ostend, O'Regan tried to console himself by taking a social glass now and then with Mrs. Mc Mahon's Irish servant.

Aleen played the harp with a skill far beyond her years. She knew by heart all the national melodies so dear to an Irishman.

"And where, Aleen," said Gerald, one evening, as she played several of his favourite airs to him, "where did you learn your Irish melodies, and songs? I did not know that you ever had been in Ireland."

"O, indeed! And pray what made you think that, Gerald?" For with all the ease of youthful intercourse, the formal "Mr." and "Miss," was quite laid aside.

"Why, Aleen, your mamma mentioned that she had resided some years in Hampshire, before she came into Oxfordshire; and you know, Aleen, you cannot reckon very many years; though, by-the-by, that very pretty name of yours is decidedly Irish."

"Oh, then, you consider Aleen a pretty name—so now, if you are not impatient and can keep quiet, I will sing you a very pretty romance all about a namesake of mine—a real Irish song. Did you ever hear of the beautiful Aleen O'Connor, the great O'Connor of the west, as they styled him? Well, I dare say you did. So now I will sing the song for you."

In a voice inexpressibly sweet, flexible, and full, for one so very young, and who had not yet attained her

power, Aleen sang the old romance of O'Connor's daughter.

Scarcely had the last notes of the song died away, and before Gerald Granville had recovered from the surprise he felt at one so young accomplishing a really difficult song, and with so much feeling, Mrs. Atherstone and her hostess, Mrs. Mc Mahon, entered the room from the adjoining saloon, the latter lady saying—

“Why, Aleen, you quite surpassed yourself this evening. You seem, Mr. Granville, to have a strong liking to my country airs. Were you ever in Ireland?”

“Ever in Ireland!” echoed Gerald, with some slight surprise, though indeed had he not been particularly happy in the society of the ladies, he might have remarked that not once during his short acquaintance had Ireland ever been mentioned except by Aleen, and then only when they happened to be alone. “Ever in Ireland? Why it's my native land, Mrs. Mc Mahon, as well as yours. My infancy and boyhood were passed in the South of Ireland. I dare say you know the place well—Castle Granville and Glandore Abbey, near Castle Townsend.”

“Glandore Abbey!” exclaimed Mrs. Atherstone; and Aleen gazed anxiously into her mother's face—for she looked pale and even agitated.

“Yes,” responded Gerald, thoughtfully; “Glandore Abbey, the residence of my family for centuries. My father was Gerald Fitzmaurice, of Glandore Abbey.”

Mrs. Atherstone actually trembled; but, mastering an emotion that could scarcely fail to be observed by all, especially by Aleen, whose sweet face became saddened, she said—

“You surprise me, Mr. Granville; but, indeed, I ought to apologize for being surprised.” Then, forcing a smile, she added, “I thought you were merely a Granville; and, knowing the Granvilles were originally an English family, I never thought about asking whether you were connected with the Irish family of Granvilles.”

Mrs. McMahon—whether she did it to relieve her friend, seeing she was not altogether herself—changed the subject; and the remainder of the evening passed somewhat less cheerfully than usual.

Gerald, on leaving, accepted an invitation to dinner the following day. As he pursued his way leisurely to his hotel, he pondered over in his mind the conversation that had so lately taken place. He saw evidently that Mrs. Atherstone was disturbed on hearing the name of his father, and Glandore Abbey mentioned. He knew, in fact, nothing whatever of Mrs. Atherstone, nor had he made any enquiries. That she was of high birth, and wealthy, he made no doubt; but where she actually resided, or what her maiden name was, he never thought about ascertaining, nor indeed till that moment did he think about it.

The following day, having some purchases to make for his voyage, he sallied out into the business part of the city, while O'Regan proceeded to Deptford, to see to the embarking of the horses, for the transport was to sail positively on the Saturday, and it was now Thursday.

Having several hours to spare, Gerald proceeded towards Westminster Hall; for he heard that her Majesty, Queen Anne, would be present that day, during the singular trial of Doctor Sacheverel. The city of London was in a ferment—a perfect fever—about this Doctor, who was accused of having preached up rebellion against the existing authorities, and defended the doctrines of non-resistance. The Church, he affirmed, was in danger. Gerald had paid little attention to all he heard about this worthy; but, feeling a sudden curiosity to have a glance at his Queen before he drew his sword in her service, he strolled towards Westminster.

On approaching the Hall, the mass of human heads that presented themselves to his view astonished him. To proceed through the crowd, even aided by his great strength, he found no easy matter. The populace seemed

wonderfully excited, and evidently seeking for some object upon which they could vent their passions.

Wishing he had not been so foolish as to get into such a crowd. Gerald began to extricate himself, and had nearly reached the foot of Westminster Bridge, when two or three gentlemen were recognised by some of the mob as belonging to the party opposed to the doctor.

"Off with their hats! Knock them off! Duck them!" was shouted by hundreds.

While these mandates were being carried into effect, two men, who had closely followed the movements of our hero, and who were dressed in rough sailors' coats, buttoned to the chin, suddenly pointed him out to the crowd, saying—

"Here's one of them. Make him take off his hat."

At first, Gerald could scarcely believe he was the person indicated, till a most filthy, unwashed artizan, with a ferocious grin of malice, thrust his hand in his face. Being incensed, Gerald with a blow felled the ruffian to the ground. Immediately the crowd closed upon him; and one of the two scoundrels, watching him eagerly, came behind, and with a short loaded bludgeon dealt him a tremendous blow on the back of the head. Gerald staggered, and fell forward perfectly stunned.

This act terrified the crowd, who now eagerly strove to get as far from the fallen man as possible. The two fellows, however, no way abashed, advanced, and lifting Gerald's body in their arms, a task of no small difficulty, though they were powerful men, carried him off towards Westminster Stairs, close at hand, without any opposition from the frightened mob. Having thrown a heavy and ample boat-cloak over his person, they descended the stairs, and hailed a wherry, which immediately answered the call.

"Here, my hearty," said one of Gerald's bearers, "here is the mate of the Lively Betsy. He got his head broke by the rioters. Shove us down the river to our boat at — Paul's wharf."

"Ay, ay, masters," responded the waterman. "The tide's down strong."

In a moment more Gerald was laid along the thwarts, and the wherry shoved off.

"I say, Jim," said one of the ruffians, in a low voice, "you laid it on with a will. Blow me if I don't think the lad's day-lights is started."

"Gammon, Bill," returned the other, contemptuously. "'Twould take a precious harder knock than that to settle him. All I'm fear'd of is his waking up afore we gets to our boat. Blow me, but 'twas a lucky go this time. I've been a watching of him going down to Deptford from them stairs this week past, but never had no opportunity of doing nothing. I have a precious boat's crew below bridge. I meant, if I caught him without that Irishman as attends him, to run our boat foul of his'n, and, in the scuffle, nab him. But he's fast enough now. Look out! Here's the bridge, and the tide's low."

"Your mate, masters," said the wherry man, "seems to have had a whopper: he's as stiff as a dead un."

"He's plenty of life in him yet," returned the former speaker. "He stirs now," added he, in a low voice.

The next instant the boat shot London Bridge with great velocity; and, the next instant, the wherry was pulled alongside a ship's boat, with six able-looking seamen in her. On her stern was painted the name of the craft she belonged to—the Lively Betsy.

After paying the wherry-man, Gerald, who gave evident signs of approaching consciousness, was carefully covered with the cloak, and lifted into the boat, which gave way immediately down the river.

"I say, Jem, he's moving," observed one of the ruffians. "Clap a gag in his mouth, and tie his arms: he's a mortal powerful young fellow."

"Ay, ay, Bill," replied Jem, "I'll spoil his potato-trap if he opens it. His arms I'll soon make easy."

So saying, he fastened a strong band across both arms.

By the time this was performed, the boat pulled along.

side a small coasting, schooner-rigged craft, on whose deck stood two seamen, who hailed the boat with a loud cheer.

"Now be handy, my men," cried Jem, "he's coming to rapidly; he's opening his eyes."

In a few minutes Gerald was hoisted into the schooner, carried into the little cabin, and laid upon the floor.

"There now, my hearty," said Jem, "you may open your peepers as soon as you like: and, what's more, I'll give you the use of your feelers."

And he cut the cords that bound Gerald's arms.

But Gerald was too feeble to do more than raise his hand to the back of his head, on which the blood had clotted.

"You'll be all right by-and-bye, my lad," said Jem. "There's a jug of water, and there's a bottle of Hollands—a medicine I always uses hexternally and hinternally."

And so saying, Jem left the cabin, bolting the strong door after him, and ascending the companion-ladder.

"Now heave short, my lads," he called out to the seamen on deck, "we have still three hours ebb, and that will be quite enough, with this stiff breeze, to bring us alongside of the Warhawk."

The anchor was soon up, and the sails of the craft were spread to the breeze. Away glided the Lively Betsey down the river. It was dark night, however, when the lights of the town of Gravesend hove in sight. The flood had made, but the breeze was strong, and right aft. Tilbury Fort was passed, and on went the Lively Betsey, till Jem vociferated—

"Hang out the signal, Bill; there lies the Warhawk."

CHAPTER XII.

DURING the period of getting under-weight, and then dropping down the river with the last of the tide, Gerald Granville began to recover the full use of his faculties. It is true he felt a stinging sensation of pain in the head, from the severe blow he had received from the bludgeon, and which for a time prevented his examining his situation minutely, but seeing the pitcher of water, he repeatedly bathed his temples, and drank a copious draught, which soon helped to restore him to some portion of his usual vigour.

By the steady and even motion of the vessel, he judged he was still sailing on the river. It was quite useless, then, distracting his head with conjectures and thoughts upon his singular abduction. He, moreover, felt quite satisfied it was a systematically planned affair; and although his captors did not seem absolutely inclined to take his life, yet it somehow struck him they would have felt very little uneasiness in perpetrating such a crime, were they to think it necessary.

Resolved in his own mind to seize the very first opportunity that offered, even at the risk of his life, in an attempt to escape, he waited patiently till an opening should be given to him.

After some time, the noise was audible of a considerable commotion upon the deck above his head; and then a shock took place, as if the vessel he was in had run against or alongside of a larger one. Heavy footsteps were soon heard descending the cabin-stairs, the door was swung back, and four able-bodied seamen entered, each having a drawn cutlass in his hand, and a heavy, brass-mounted pistol in his belt.

Gerald looked keenly into the features of these men,

and ran his eyes over their strong, wiry, and muscular frames. They seemed to be fellows who had seen service, and wild service, too, in a far more trying clime than that of Europe. Their bronzed complexions, bristly beards, and bushy whiskers, giving them a fierce appearance.

"Ah, my hearty," said one of the sailors, rolling a huge piece of tobacco into a commodious recess under his cheek, "I see you have opened your daylights. So bear a hand, and follow us quietly; otherwise, another knock over the scone may be necessary."

"You may spare your brutality," retorted Gerald, quietly rising, "lead on."

Two men led the way laughing, while the other two brought up the rear.

On gaining the deck of the little vessel, Gerald strove to look about him; but the night was intensely dark, and the atmosphere heavy and thick. He could, however, just discern the dark hull and tall spars of a much larger vessel along-side of them.

"Now, then, bear a hand," vociferated a strong, hoarse voice, from the deck of the large vessel. "Let us have no more of this cursed delay. You have stopped too long as it is."

"Up the ladder with you, master," said one of the men to Gerald; "it's devilish late on the tide."

It at once struck our hero that if he ascended the side of the large vessel his fate would be sealed, and all chance of escape lost. Just as he put his foot upon the ladder, the sound of a large bell sounded from the shore, and his eye, for an instant, caught the twinkling of lights on his right, which satisfied him the land was at no great distance.

There were few better swimmers than Gerald Granville, and he at once resolved to make a desperate attempt to escape. As he ascended to the ladder, a sailor, with a cocked pistol, was following, when, suddenly lifting his foot, Gerald struck so violent a blow upon the head of the man close below him, that he drove him and the

other man back upon the deck of the little craft. The next instant he kicked off his shoes and sprang overboard. A scene of indescribable confusion ensued on board both crafts. Oath, execrations, and abuse from one to the other, pealed through the air.

As he rose from the plunge and endeavoured to extricate himself from his coat (for the tide was rapidly hurrying him away from the vessels) Gerald heard one of the men say, with a savage curse—

“Not a boat along-side, by ——! The Captain’s ashore with the jolly-boat; and the gig is crushed to pieces by the lubberly way you came along-side.”

“Shiver my timbers,” exclaimed another of the men; “here’s a pretty go! But, cast off the schooner—here’s wind enough.”

Gerald heard no more; the tide was running up, though he knew it not, for the gloom was excessive, and he at first swam with the tide, whilst, during the excitement of his escape and the first few moments succeeding it, he bestowed but little thought upon the danger attending it. He guessed he was in the river a little below Gravesend; but he could not distinguish the shore, for a mist was lying on the waters, and the river full a mile broad.

As he looked round, he heard a man’s voice, and then caught a glimpse of a vessel under sail, following in his wake. The instant he perceived it, he came across a small hawser, of which he immediately laid hold, and then it was he became aware of the immense strength of the spring tide. With the greatest difficulty he held on; as he retained his hold, the vessel he had seen passed within a few yards, and he could distinctly hear the imprecations of the men as they passed. At first, he greatly feared being discovered, for they kept swinging a large lantern over the side.

Gerald mentally breathed a prayer of thanksgiving to Providence as the schooner shot by and disappeared in the mist.

He then resolved, as he held by no means an enviable situation, to gain the deck of the small vessel to whose hawser he was indebted for his safety. He could perceive she was a little one-masted boat, not more than eight or ten tons, with a half-deck; in fact, one of the Gravesend Peter boats, employed in shrimping, and generally worked by one man and a boy.

It was not an easy task to get on board; but he succeeded at last. No sooner, however, had he clambered up upon the deck, than a rough voice, between a growl and a snore, sung out from under the forecastle—

"Hallo, there! Who the devil are you? What do you want aboard, and be d—d to you? I'll welt you with a rope's end if you don't mizzle, you shore-going thief."

And with these words a great, rough, grizzled head was thrust out, and then the broad shoulders of the owner followed, covered with a red flannel shirt, and inexpressibles of the same materials; a horn lantern was in one of his hands, and a broken boat-hook in the other.

Holding his lantern up, he cast a glance around; and, perceiving our hero sitting on the stump of the bowsprit, he at once sung out—

"Bill, boy! Bill, you lazy lubber, rouse out! There's the devil, for all I know, aboard of us! Rouse up!"

"I'm feared to come, father," replied the person appealed to. "If it's the ould one he's arter the shrimps."

"My good fellow," said Gerald, rising and jumping down alongside of the startled shrimper, "don't be alarmed. I'm neither the devil nor one of his satellites."

"Curse your set of lights," retorted the man. "Who are you? How did you get here? I'll poke this in your ribs if you don't start overboard in a shake." And the old fisherman flourished his boat-hook in downright earnest.

"Be he the devil, father?" timidly inquired the boy Bill, from the hatchway. "Don't 'ee go near he, father; he smells mortal strong of brimstone, now."

"Confound your stupidity!" ejaculated Gerald, catching the old man by the arm, to save himself from a thrust of his novel weapon. "My good fellow, you are in error. I am no stealer of shrimps. The noise you make may cost me my life; and then you will lose a couple of guineas, which I will give you if you hold your tongue, and weigh anchor."

"Don't heed he, father," interposed the boy; "give him a poke aft with the boat-hook."

But Gerald's tone and manner, and the clear sight of his dress the old man got, besides the apparition of some gold which Gerald pulled from his pocket, satisfied the fisherman he was no purloiner of shrimps, at all events.

"Zounds! who are you then?" growled the old man. "How did you get on board?"

"Never mind the how," replied Gerald. "There's three guineas for you. Some rascals were kidnapping me, and I escaped from them by swimming."

"Lord love 'ee! I see it now. They were crimpers, curse 'em," exclaimed the fisherman. "But you're safe now. Come into my cabin, and I'll give you a stiff glass of grog, and a dry jacket. Jump out of the cuddy, you whelp," added he to his son Bill. "Step into my nest, your honour," continued the old man, "though it's rather low for your worship."

With some difficulty, Gerald squeezed his tall form into the cabin of the shrimper—which, probably, measured six feet in length, by four in height, with two sleeping places, one on each side. The candle, being taken from the lantern, gave the old man a more perfect survey of his guest; and, uninitiated as he was in the mystery of the dress, &c., of the aristocracy of the land, he could see, judging by the splendid gold watch, rings, and remaining apparel of his passenger, that he was far above those he was accustomed to mix with, or even see.

Nevertheless, he produced from a side locker a stone jar, filled with unexceptionable Hollands, of which

Gerald, very willingly, took a couple of glasses, or rather horns.

Between our hero and the burly form of the old shrimper the little cuddy was pretty well filled; indeed the heat became so oppressive that Gerald, wet as he was, very willingly sallied out upon deck, after putting on a clean dry Guernsey frock, and a pair of the boy Bill's tremendous shoes, for which he slipped into the hand of the delighted urchin (a youth of some fifteen years,) a golden guinea.

As he turned round to go out of the cabin the old fisherman caught a sight of the blood clotted on the back of his head.

"Ugh, sir!" exclaimed he, "I knew it was them infernal crimpers. There's been a long, low, black devil of a schooner lying off Gravesend these several days. I knowed there were queer customers aboard. They don't care how they knocks a man's head about."

"A good washing will remedy that evil," said Gerald.

"I can't think as how, your honour, they could think of mistaking the likes of you," rejoined the fisherman.

Grumbling and swearing alternately, the old man and his boy got the anchor up, and setting their sails, they ran up the river, with a stiffish breeze that had sprung up from the east. In less than five hours they reached Blackwall, by which time Gerald's clothes, which had been hanging before the small stove in the cuddy, were pretty dry. Still, he had no coat, and was obliged to be content with a Flushing jacket belonging to the old man.

Giving the shrimper the direction and name of his hotel, he landed near where now stands St. Catherine's Docks; and, hailing a sedan, was at once conveyed to his hotel.

It was not yet morning; and the streets were nearly deserted. At his inn he only found the porter and the night waiter in attendance. Their astonishment was great, indeed, on beholding our hero's strange costume; nevertheless, they appeared rejoiced at his safe return,

as his servant, O'Regan, had expressed excessive uneasiness at his prolonged absence, and had been absent all night, with two of the city watch, to discover what had become of him.

Being too fatigued to enter into any particulars, Gerald retired immediately to his chamber; and, throwing off his motley attire, went to bed, and, in a marvellously short time, was fast asleep, notwithstanding many perplexing thoughts, and an uneasy sensation where he had received the blow. His slumbers were deep and long; for, when he was awakened by the bright sunshine, and the noise and bustle without, he conjectured that it was late in the day.

As he looked round the chamber, he perceived Dennis O'Regan standing with his back towards him, holding in one hand, between the finger and thumb, the clumsy shoes of the boy Bill, and, in the other, the Flushing-jacket. Having contemplated these strange articles, he broke into a long laugh, muttering to himself—

"Be Jabus, after all, he's only been at a masquerade; but, faix, he'd a mighty queer choice of garments, if he danced in these beautiful shoes. But, murder! how's this?" And he suddenly let go the jacket, and picked up the garments which showed evident signs of having had a good ducking. "Be the immortal powers!" continued Dennis, "he's been swimming!" And, turning round, Gerald burst into a laugh at the ludicrous expression of O'Regan's face.

"Be my conscience, sir, you *may* laugh," said Dennis, in a serious tone, "but I never passed such a night as I did yesterday. But the Lord be praised! it's turned out nothing after all. Where did you get so wet, sir? And how, in the name of goodness, did you get these articles? Was it masquerading you were?"

"In truth, Dennis," replied Gerald, "it was anything but masquerading. In the first place, I was knocked over the head; and, in the next, had a swim for my life. But don't look so agast. Here I am, safe and sound."

"I knew there was something wrong, sir," said O'Regan, as he examined his master's head, and heard a full account of the affair. "There's some villany at work, sir. I'll swear this was no crimping business, as the city watch wanted to persuade me. Hadn't I better go for a surgeon, sir?"

"Wash off the blood, Dennis, and get me a piece of sticking-plaster; that's all the doctoring I shall require. You ought to know that a knock on the head is not so very uncommon an occurrence in our little Island; and, somehow or other, whether our heads are harder or thicker than our opposite neighbours, these knocks do not turn out very tragical. After all it may have been a crimping affair, as they are eagerly getting men not only to man our ships, but also to man certain very suspicious-looking crafts fitting out for some foreign expedition."

O'Regan shook his head, but said little, while he assisted to finish his young master's toilet. But in his own mind, he thought very differently, and firmly resolved not to lose sight of him, while they remained in London.

Having breakfasted, and finding himself not a particle the worse for his night's adventure, he was preparing to set out on a visit to Mrs. Atherstone, when the waiter delivered him a notice from the captain of the transport, *The Royal Anne*, to the effect that she would sail on the morrow with the turn of the tide, an intimation which delayed our hero in paying his visit till the hour of dinner.

On proceeding to the house of Mrs. Mc Mahon, he was extremely amazed at hearing from the servants that Mrs. Atherstone and daughter had left for Oxfordshire early in the morning. A letter, however, was handed to him from that lady.

More vexed than the occasion seemed to warrant, Gerald returned in a musing fit to his hotel, and opening the letter, read as follows—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"It is with feelings of deep regret I have to apologise to you for our sudden and unforeseen departure from London. We are too sensible of the obligation we are under to your gallantry, not to feel distressed at this *contre-temps*, and trust that although a long period may intervene before we meet again, you will till then allow us a place in your memory.

"Wishing you, from our hearts, a brilliant and fortunate career in the profession you have selected, and a safe return to your native land—

"Believe me ever your sincere friend,

"MATILDA ATHERSTONE."

Gerald read this short epistle twice; folded it up, and placed it in his pocket-book. The following morning he embarked with his attendant, O'Regan, on board The Royal Anne, which got under weigh shortly after.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE transport, which, for the days of "good Queen Anne," was a very respectable and tolerably sea-worthy craft, fortunately had very nearly sufficient room below her deck for the living and dead cargo she was destined to carry to the Hague.

The live cargo consisted of a detachment of infantry, and double the number of recruits, under charge of Lieutenant Carisford and a young ensign of the name of Dawlish; Gerald Granville, his attendants and horses; the captain of the transport, and twenty-two able-bodied seamen. As to her dead cargo, it was composed of very

combustible materials, being nothing more nor less than gunpowder. As much as possible was stowed away in her hold; the rest, contained in kegs, was ranged along the deck and covered with tarpaulins.

In those good old days—as it is the fashion to call them—when steam was only seen from cooking apparatus, and when square-rigged craft worked to windward, with anything but a certainty of gaining ground—The Royal Anne was destined to proceed but slowly on her voyage to the Hague, though she commenced her trip extremely well; starting from Gravesend with a fine north west breeze, but very doubtful sky. With wind and tide she glided into the Lower Hope, when suddenly her sails flapped against her masts—again filled with an expiring puff—and finally reposed in very picturesque folds from the yards and spars. The mate whistled and gazed up at the sails; the passengers looked blank.

“Confound the wind!” exclaimed a very fat corporal, who was extremely anxious to get to the Hague.

“We are going to have a calm, captain,” said Lieutenant Carisford, looking over the bulwarks upon the unruffled surface of the river.

“No, sir,” replied the Captain, turning his glass in every direction. “We shall have a strong breeze from the eastward in a short time; often the case here.”

“I wish to Heaven it had had the politeness to stay east,” said Ensign Dawlish, with a very doleful look. “It’s always my luck. Cursed hard a man cannot go to sea but he must always have a foul wind. I told you, Carisford, this morning, how it would be.”

“You are a regular Jonah, Dawlish,” observed the handsome Lieutenant, with a smile.

“Did you ever make the voyage to Holland before, sir?” inquired the Ensign of our hero, who just then joined them.

“I have not had that pleasure, if pleasure it is,” replied Gerald. “I regret to hear you say you are not one of fortune’s favourites at sea.”

"No, faith, nor for the matter of that," rejoined the Ensign, laughing, "does the jade treat me very well upon terra firma."

Gerald soon turned from the foppishly dressed person and insignificant figure of the Ensign, to enter into conversation with Lieutenant Carisford, whose fine form, prepossessing features and manners at once engaged his interest. The Lieutenant was struck by the same qualifications in Gerald.

The Captain of the transport was quite right; for the wind did come up from the eastward, forcing the Royal Anne to brace her yards, and commence that pleasing manœuvre, called tacking, which enables a passenger to get the most for his money, by performing five times the intended distance.

An easterly wind has, proverbially, like that domestic animal the cat, nine lives. For the first three days it kept gradually increasing, till it encouraged itself into a regular gale; so that on the fifth, the namesake of the Queen thought it no disgrace to show her stern to the enemy, and seek shelter from the storm in the very disagreeable harbour of Sheerness.

A somewhat similar disposition, and a mutual feeling of interest in each other, soon rendered Gerald Granville and Arthur Carisford intimate and social with each other. Unfortunately, the east wind had more than its usual complement of lives, for nearly a fortnight elapsed before the transport could resume her voyage; and during that period, a close friendship ensued between the young men, who passed their time in rambles over the uninteresting Isle of Sheppey, and in excursions up the Medway to Rochester and Chatham.

At length, to the infinite relief of all parties, the east wind ceased, and the weather settled. The Royal Anne started with studding sails alow and aloft, and actually ran within a few hours of her destination, notwithstanding the repeated assertions of doleful Ensign Dawlish "that something would happen."

To this, he would frequently add, shaking his head—
“We are not over yet—we are not over yet.”

It was night as the *Royal Anne* approached Holland. The officers were below sipping such wine as the captain of the transport had provided for them, and which was by no means to be found fault with, when a sudden and most violent shock threw Ensign Dawlish, who had just laid hold of a flask, right over the table, with his head immersed in the open locker from which the flask had just been extracted.

“Oh! I knew how it would be,” moaned the ensign, as Gerald, who, with Carisford, had also been capsized, extracted him from the locker. From the noise and confusion on deck, they conjectured that the transport had struck upon one of the many sand-banks that defend the entrance into Scheveling. They hurried upon deck, where a scene of confusion and uproar, beyond description, existed. The soldiers and recruits were pitched right and left as *The Royal Anne* rolled heavily from side to side; while the crew were busily engaged taking in sail.

Carisford soon got his men under control; and as the weather was fortunately not rough, the only consequences attending the disaster, would be the delay of a tide.

The following morning, the voyagers were all landed safe and sound. Gerald, taking leave of Carisford—who proceeded with his men by canal—set forward for the Hague on horseback. On reaching the Hague, he learned that the duke was there, as Generalissimo of the allied army, actively engaged against the forces commanded by the Duke of Burgundy and Marshal Boufflers. This induced him to push on as fast as he could with his horses, fearing to be too late. He arrived, however, in sufficient time to gain a tolerable share of the laurels that crowned the first campaign of the Duke, to whom he was personally introduced, having been attached to the cavalry regiment, commanded by Colonel Delmar.

At the storming of D——, his good fortune as well as

his daring gallantry led him into a situation, where he performed a most important service to the Duke, and supplied, for a time, the place of his aide-de-camp, two of whom had been shot by his side. His Grace bestowed upon him unqualified praise for his gallantry, and offered him a commission in the distinguished regiment he was attached to ; but having promised Sir Hugh not to take permanent service, though he greatly regretted the promise, he was obliged to decline, stating the reason.

He, however, did not forget his friend Carisford, who was wounded in the action, and had the satisfaction, shortly afterwards, at the storming of Linburg, where he was personally attached to the staff of the Duke, to procure Carisford a captain's commission. The Duke of Marlborough took an exceeding fancy to Gerald Granville, and earnestly requested him to write to Sir Hugh, and obtain his consent to enter the army, offering him a captain's commission. This, Gerald was most eager to do, and wrote accordingly ; but before his letter could reach its destination, he received one, the contents of which filled his heart with grief and astonishment.

The letter had experienced considerable delays in reaching Gerald, being dated two months back ; but the rapid movements of the army, the unsettled state of the country, and the insecure method of transit from one place to another, had caused delay. The only wonder was that it ever reached its destination ; for the worthy writer, Mr. Briefless, had forgotten to have it forwarded in the government despatches.

" Cork, September 9th, 170—."

" My dear and respected young friend,

" I write in the greatest haste and deep distress of mind. You have lost the best and kindest of relatives, and an old and highly respected friend.

" Your honourable uncle, Sir Hugh, was carried off

suddenly by apoplexy, at Castle Granville. The event has so confounded, perplexed, and confused me, that I scarcely know what I am doing. I set out for the Castle the moment the intelligence reached me. What astonishes me, at the same time, is that no will is to be found. It is not possible it was destroyed. But no matter: you are heir-at-law. Excuse this letter; but I trust you will set out on your return as soon as you receive it. I wrote to Mr. Harmer, who was unfortunately in Oxfordshire. Everything shall be done that ought to be done. I have sealed up everything.

“ Hoping to see you soon,

“ I remain,

“ My dear young friend,

“ Your sincere well-wisher,

“ JOHN BRIEFLESS.”

Our hero, now Sir Gerald Granville, after reading this letter, remained immersed in profound sorrow and thought. He loved his noble and kind-hearted uncle. As a fond father, from his earliest childhood, he had done everything to repair the loss Providence had thought fit to inflict upon him, that the best of parents could have done; and a strong and mutual love grew in the hearts of each. This sudden blow came upon Gerald with stunning force; he even upbraided himself for having left his uncle to gratify his own inclinations. One thought brought on another; and a maze of painful reflection followed each other through his disturbed brain. He stood alone in the world, without a single tie of relationship. The unfortunate fate of his father's family—the mysterious abduction of his brother Cuthbert—his uncertain fate—the mystery attending the introduction of the false Cuthbert Fitzmaurice—the attempt, if not on his life, at least upon his departure from London—even the sudden withdrawal of Mrs. Atherstone from the metropolis,

when he felt so unaccountably interested and struck with the beauty and grace of the young Aleen—all these events floated through the young soldier's brain in melancholy array.

O'Regan's grief was as great as his master's; and bitterly he bewailed their absence, which prevented their attending his remains to their last resting place.

The entrance of Captain Carisford roused Sir Gerald from his gloomy and melancholy thoughts.

"I would leave on the instant, Arthur," said our hero to his friend, who learned the intelligence of the Baronet's death with much regret, "could my presence be of any earthly benefit to any one living. But, as far as my beloved uncle is concerned, alas, it is too late to show him even that last sad token of respect and love; and as to worldly wealth and my prospects as heir, I am quite content to abide the worthy lawyer's attention to it; for it strikes me, in our present position, with this great battle pending between the two forces, it would never do to leave my post."

"I perfectly agree with you, Gerald," said Captain Carisford. "Besides, you have a brilliant career before you, and your own inclination prompts you to follow it up. It strikes me that previously to this contemplated battle, it would be as well, as no obstacle intervenes, if you were to accept the Duke's earnest offer, and take command of that fine body of men who so anxiously wish to enter the field under you."

Accordingly, the next morning Sir Gerald Granville obtained an audience of the Duke, which ended in his appointment to the command of the ——— Dragoons.

It is not our purpose, nor does the interest of our story require it, to follow step by step the military career of Sir Gerald Granville. It was a period when rank and wealth, combined with great gallantry, obtained rapid and high promotion. Sir Gerald gained laurels rapidly; he accompanied the Duke, with only thirteen thousand English troops, through extensive countries, and reached,

after a most extraordinary march, the banks of the Danube. The enemy were defeated in a brilliant action at Donavert. The river was crossed, and the kingdom of Bavaria laid under contribution. There Sir Gerald Granville became the hero of the hour—saved the Duke at a moment of great peril—was severely wounded, and received a lieutenant-colonel's commission.

Here we must leave him for a time, requesting our reader's indulgence while we look after some of the other characters, who have to perform no inconsiderable part in the further progress of our story.

CHAPTER XIV.

WE commenced our story at a time called by Voltaire the "Era of British Liberty," the year 1688. The reader, we trust, will allow us to take him to a period about five years after that stormy epoch, and also to convey him to a very wild part of the world, though quite near home.

In the year 1693 there dwelt upon the Island of St. Mary, one of the group forming the Cornish Archipelago, called the Scilly Isles, a fisherman and pilot of the name of Jack Morris. This singular cluster of Islands lies about thirty miles off the west coast of Cornwall. Seven of them were inhabited at the time of our story, by a very simple, industrious, inoffensive race, who subsisted by fishing and piloting vessels clear of the vast number of hidden rocks, shoals, &c., which render the navigation very perilous. Nevertheless, small as these islands are, they feed a goodly number of sheep, and are well populated.

The Island of St. Mary, the largest, is nearly four miles long, by something better than two broad; and possesses

within its boundaries various antiquities, and the remains of a Druid's temple and sepulchre. At the period of our narrative, these islands were as much dreaded by navigators as the ancient Scylla and Charybdis, for they did not then boast of the noble lighthouse that now stands on St. Agnes.

Even in the present day, when steam roars, and puffs its snow-white wreaths over land and sea, the Scilly Islands are almost a *terra incognita*. Nevertheless, they are well worthy a traveller's notice.

On the south-west side of St. Mary's, in a snug cottage—built near the edge of a very steep cliff, that overhung a small but safe anchorage for half a dozen fishing-boats—dwelt Jack Morris. Jack was a stout, hale old fellow, nearly sixty years of age. He was a widower, and the father of two ruddy, hard-working, comely girls—the eldest about twenty, and the youngest fifteen.

To the back of the cottage lay ten or twelve acres of tolerable land, and tolerably cultivated. Along the cliff might be seen, on a fine sunny day, some hundreds of split ling (or codfish), and conger eels of most enormous size, stretched out drying. On the beach below were hauled up three or four large pilchard boats; and, riding at anchor, two luggers. All these things—land, cottage, fish, and boats—called Jack Morris master and owner. It is not to be wondered, then, that by the little community of St. Mary's honest Jack should be styled a very thriving, if not wealthy, individual.

Jack thought so too; and if any one beheld him on a fine, sunny winter's morning—his broad, ample chest, bared to the keen north-east wind; his dark, sunburnt, but most good-humoured face, with a pipe stuck in the side of his mouth, his large fisherman's boots reaching high above his knees—sitting at the door of his cottage, with his jug of strong ale before him, and his twinkling grey eyes complacently watching attentively his rosy-checked daughters, as they actively turned the dried fish to the sun, and then gazing on his craft, as she lazily rose

and fell in the long ground-swell, rolling over the hidden ranges of rock that lay scattered across the mouth of the cove, they would say that honest Jack Morris was, in truth, a very comfortable man, and very well to do.

One blowing morning in November, a month famous for haze, fog, storm—in fact, for every thing unpleasant—Jack Morris, after an early breakfast, and looking up first at the clouds, and then out over the heavy sea, called together his crew, consisting of four men and a boy, and declared he would have a cruise, as he was sure they would fall in with some homeward-bound craft, or anything else that might turn up. It had blown a gale the preceding night from the south, and in the morning when it lulled, the wind shifted a point or two to the eastward, with what a landsman would call thick, dirty weather.

Jack Morris and his hardy crew were soon aboard his fast lugger, and under her fore-lug and mizen, he ran off to sea several miles, riding over the heavy swells like a duck. Having gained an offing, he lay to. For several hours they kept a sharp look-out, but not a single sail met Jack's sight; so, not to be idle, they put out their heavy lead lines, and commenced catching some cod and hake.

As the day declined, and the weather grew thicker, Jack Morris began to growl—first, at losing a monstrous large cod, and next at not seeing a single ship.

"You may let draw the fore-sheet, Will," said Morris; "there's not a craft on the seas to-day, whatever's gone with them."

Now Jack was not just in his remark, for unless he ran right into a ship, or a ship right into him, it was quite impossible, from the fog, to see her. Fifty craft might have passed within a quarter of a mile of him without his seeing one of them.

As Will let draw the fore-sheet, he also muttered to himself at not seeing anything in the shape of a ship, though there ought to be, he thought, a whole fleet, after the night's gale, and the point the wind was in.

The sail filled, and away went the lively lugger, bounding on over the crested waves, her bow for her island home. Old Jack lighted his pipe, called for a stone jar, and filled out a good glass of pure Hollands for each of his crew, and half a one for the boy, who, if consulted, would have preferred a full one. They then stretched themselves along under the weather bulwarks.

"That was a bit of luck old Griffs had," said one of the men to the skipper. "Had that Indiaman struck ten feet further in on 'The Bishops,' she'd have gone to pieces like a bit of rotten spun-yarn."

"Starboard! My eyes! hard a starboard!" shouted the man forward. "I'm blowed if we ain't slap into a craft of some sort or other."

Jack, who had hold of the tiller, jammed it hard a-starboard, looking anxiously and keenly to windward, as the lugger shot up into the wind's eye, escaping, by a few yards, running aboard the dismantled hull of a Dutch galliot. Not a soul appeared to be on board, for the lugger's crew hailed repeatedly.

"Here's a prize, skipper!" cried the crew of the lugger. "Let us get the punt out, and see what's aboard her."

All alive at the prospect of a prize, the small boat was launched over the side. Notwithstanding the stiff breeze and heavy sea, the lugger lay to, with only Jack Morris and the boy; while the four men pulled on board the dismantled craft, up whose side they contrived to get, after some difficulty, and watching the seas.

"My eyes, lads!" exclaimed the man named Will, in a voice betokening disappointment, as his eyes roamed over the wreck. "My eyes and limbs, if it han't blown masts, sails, riggings, and bulwarks away! Blow me, I wonder it didn't blow the eye-bolts away too. She's full of water, and devil a pump fit to work in her."

Their first job was to get the hatch off; and then Will poked his head down to bless himself with the expected sight of Dutch cheeses, hollands, brandy, or anything else that might be; but, much to their vexation, they

beheld only a quantity of saturated ballast, a few coils of rope, and some broken planks floating about. Down the forecastle, however, they found a cask of hollands, a small one of brandy, and a large quantity of soaked provisions.

"Now, for the cabin!" exclaimed Will, hurrying below. The water had just reached the cabin-floor; but the entire furniture of the cabin was all knocked of a heap with the heavy rolling of the craft. As Will kept poking his head and his hands into the berths and lockers he was startled by hearing a faint cry from one of the berths.

Will paused; and then sung out to his comrades to come below. Hearing the cry repeated, he climbed into a berth, and, to his great amazement, found a young boy, about four years of age, rolled up in the blankets, but half dead, and scarcely able to utter the cry that attracted the rough but kind-hearted sailor.

"Well, I'm blessed, Jem," said the finder of the child to his comrade, "if them lubbers as owned this here craft, hadn't black hearts to leave this here boy to die of starvation. It's nigh dead with cold now. But bear a hand; let us get back to the lugger. Old Jack, who has a heart as soft and as big as a pumpkin, will be sure to take to the young 'un, if so be as he doesn't slip his cable. Poor thing! He can't speak! Yet it's a fine lump of a child, too. Why, I declare the little fellow is a opening his eyes. That's right, my boy. Cheerly! cheerly! How cold his limbs feel! There! cling to me, my dear. I'll warm you."

Will Vigers was a rough nurse. Nevertheless, he wrapped the child up carefully, and got down into the boat with him—not an easy task.

Having arranged a hawser, and everything ready to take the Dutch galliote in tow, they shoved off for the lugger.

"Well, here's a rum day's work," said old Jack as he received the child in his arms; "here's a pet for my

Nanny, anyhow." And the old man dived down to warm the child at the little cabouse fire in the fore cabin of the lugger. "While there's life there's hope," said the old sailor, dipping a piece of bread into some brandy, and putting it into the boy's mouth. Then, heating a blanket piping hot, he wrapped it round the child, and placed him near the stove, carefully secured from any harm by the rolling of the lugger. Jack Morris did his best for the little stranger; he had no other remedies. Brandy and hollands, internally and externally, always cured the ills to which he was subjected. So, having taken all the care he could of the poor boy, he returned upon deck.

It was not without much labour and difficulty that the crew of the lugger managed to take the unwieldy galliot in tow, expecting her to sink in the heavy lurches she made in the seas. Nevertheless, they got her safe into the Cove before night-fall, and secured her.

Jack then proceeded to look after his charge, and found the child in a profuse perspiration, and asleep. This pleased the old seaman much; so wrapping him up, he carried him ashore to his delighted daughters, especially the youngest, who declared he was the handsomest child she ever saw.

We are not quite prepared to state the mode of treatment used to restore the boy. All we do know is, that by noon next day he was as well as ever he was. Just as honest Jack was pondering in his own mind whether he was Dutch built, or what, the boy spoke some words in sound English, which completely astounded Jack, though he felt monstrously pleased at this, to him, evident token that he was not a Dutchman.

But the boy seemed sadly at a loss to express all he wanted to say. Whether the suffering he had gone through (for he must have been a long period without nourishment) had injured his speaking, or he was backward for his age, was beyond the comprehension of Jack and his daughters; but he completely amazed them by

jumbling up a confusion of persons and things, such as castles and soldiers, and Nurse Brady; and that his name was Cuth. something. But the rest baffled them; his garments were of the finest description, betokening wealth in his parents.

Old Jack was highly pleased; swore old ocean had treated him infinitely better than his departed wife—he had always prayed her to give him a son, and he was blessed only with daughters. Little Cuth. should be his son—he would make a man of him, and a sailor, which was better.

In the mean time, the Dutch galliote was left high and dry the next day by the tide; and all the inhabitants of St. Mary's, great and small, with their worthy and really good pastor at their head, came to examine the prize of Jack Morris. The name on her stern, till the Reverend Mr. Trevillian arrived, puzzled the most learned of the island. It defied their spelling; and, as to pronouncing, that was out of the question. At length, their pastor said her name was Hohengollenn, and that she hailed from Lieskenshoeck.

The worthy people rubbed their heads, and looked upon Mr. Trevillian with profound veneration.

He further told them that this place with the hard name was on the River Scheldt, not a great way from Antwerp.

The galliote was as sound as a bell, and only that she had a hole knocked in her bottom, in which was stuck an immense piece of rock, a quantity of sea-weed and other things sucked in afterwards, and which kept her from sinking, she was as good as ever. Jack, therefore, thought she was a capital prize, and he would sell her to some of the Falmouth traders.

Mr. Trevillian came and examined the child, took down the name of Cuthbert, and his nurse's name, Brady, together with the day of the month, year, &c., in case hereafter it might serve to guide those who had lost the child and the vessel. He even proposed to write

to Antwerp and state particulars; but, whether the good pastor's letter ever reached its destination, or not, we cannot say, as no notice was ever taken of it. In so remote a spot as St. Mary's intelligence of distant places was rarely received, or indeed cared for.

In the course of a few weeks a trader, from Falmouth, put into St. Mary's, and purchased the galliote. Setting up jury masts, he took her to Plymouth.

The Island of St. Mary, though little more than three miles long, and two broad, a convenient size, as any of its inhabitants might walk round it before dinner, to see that no part of it was missing, contained, nevertheless, more inhabitants than all the rest. Still, the finding of the Dutch vessel with the unpronounceable name—like everything else in this world—was only a nine days' wonder.

The good clergyman was persuaded in his own mind, by the beauty of Cuthbert's face and person, and the fineness and elegance of the garments found on him, that sometime or other he would ascertain his origin, and discover that he was the lost child of wealthy parents.

As to old Morris, he loved the boy as a son. Both daughters married, and so Cuthbert remained with the old man. At fourteen, his feats of daring skill at sea astonished even the hardy pilots of the Scilly Islands.

But, at this period of his age, an event occurred that changed his destiny.

CHAPTER XV

DURING the month of October, 1707, several tremendous gales of wind forced the Scilly pilots to keep their

snug coves. The sea ran in fearfully upon their iron-bound shores.

One terrible night, old Jack and his *protegé* were roused from their slumbers by the deep boom of heavy cannon, coming from seaward.

"Ah!" said Jack, to his adopted son, "those guns come from some big ship. They are heavy guns. I fear, from the direction, she is struck on some of the Bishops. If so, she will perish, and every soul on board. Hark! there go the guns. Lord a mercy, what a night it is! Nothing made of wood will float long this weather bumping on our rocks."

"Could we not get the lugger out, father?" asked Cuthbert, anxiously; and try and save life?"

"Lord love you, boy! The canvas is not made that would stand this gale," replied old Morris. "We couldn't clear the mouth of the cove, unless the wind shifts to the westward."

With the morning's light, it *did* shift, after a deluge of rain; and Cuthbert and the lugger's crew close reefed their sails, and gallantly breasting the huge seas at the entrance, stood out in the direction they thought the guns came from in the night.

That fearful night, the gallant Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and all his crew, in his noble ship, "the Association," totally perished; with three other men of war—The Eagle, the Romney, and the Firebrand—returning from the Mediterranean to England. His loss filled the nation with mourning.

The crew of the lugger, with young Cuthbert urging them on, saved many things; but the most important was the Admiral's body, and a large chest, clasped with iron, having the name of Grosvenor on it.

The Admiral's body was brought ashore and buried; but, a short time after, a brig of war came to the Islands to investigate the loss of the ships, when the body of the Admiral was taken up and conveyed to London, and afterwards buried in Westminster Abbey, while a mid-

shipman's berth was offered to young Cuthbert for his gallantry; and the family of Grosvenor afterwards declared they would do all in their power to forward his interest in the navy.

Cuthbert was frantic with joy—old Morris, though he grieved sadly over the loss of his *protegé*, was persuaded by Mr. Trevillian not to baulk the lad's fortunes. Thus Cuthbert Morris became a midshipman on board a fine frigate.

As a midshipman, Cuthbert visited many parts of the world, and was in several actions in which he distinguished himself for gallantry, and strictly performing his duty. His six years being passed, he underwent his examination, on his return to England, with great credit; and, through the interest of Captain Grosvenor, was at once appointed third lieutenant of a first-class frigate; and after some future service, in which he gained great credit and praise, he was appointed to the command of a revenue cruiser of one hundred and eighty tons, and received orders to sail with sealed directions for the coast of Ireland.

On passing the Scilly Islands, Cuthbert, then Captain Morris, lay-to off the little Island of St. Mary, and proceeded ashore. It was a day of jubilee in St. Mary's when the young Commander landed. Jack Morris, then eighty years old, was still hale and well, and was the very first to cheer the young sailor on landing. The old man rejoiced at beholding his adopted son a Commander at seven and twenty, and as fine and handsome a man as any in the service of Great Britain. The aged parson was gathered to his fathers. So, after embracing his worthy, kind-hearted protector, shedding a tear over the grave of his pious instructor, and taking a careful copy of the pastor's entry in the parish books concerning himself, he bade adieu to the male part of the population of St. Mary's by heartily shaking their hands, and of the female by kissing their blooming cheeks, and then sailed for the coast of Ireland.

On the south-west of Ireland, scarcely four leagues

from the entrance of Bantry Bay, is a very remarkable headland, called Three-castle head; and, a little further east, is the Mizen head. These bold and picturesque promontories stretch out abruptly into the almost always troubled waters of the broad Atlantic. Perpetually exposed to the long rolling swell from the Bay of Biscay, and open to almost every point in the compass, the wild and rocky bases of these headlands are seldom, if ever, seen, unless wrapt in a cloud of foam from the angry surges that dash with sullen roar against their iron fronts.

Towards the decline of a short November day, during which a heavy south-west gale swept the surface of the ocean, plunging its bosom with deep furrows, and sending in upon the iron-bound shore, the long mountainous swell, which, breaking, left the whole line of coast wrapt in a cloud of mist and spray.

Off this coast, about six miles, just between Three-Castle Head and the Mizen, lay a cutter-rigged craft, of some one hundred and eighty tons. She was lying-to; her head sea-ward, under a reefed trysail, foresail, and storm-jib, and her topmast housed.

She was a large cutter for the period we write of; and though she did not resemble your dashing wedge-shaped cutters of the present day, with their long, graceful counters, tall spars, and canvas enough in their mainsail alone to rig out even a Dutch settlement with unmentionables, yet she was a fine worthy looking craft, rather bluff in the bows, perhaps, wide in the beam, and with high bulwarks. There was, altogether, something in her look as she rose and fell gracefully and easily on the storm-tossed billow, which broke at times across her bows, that would please a seaman's eye. The William and Mary (such was her name) had no long pennant flying from her housed top-mast, nor ensign from her peak. It was very evident she did not wish to be taken for a queen's ship.

The day was closing fast, and the appearance of the approaching night was anything but agreeable. The low scud came in rapidly from seaward, and setting on the

summits of the mizen-head, wrapt them in its chill embrace, leaving naught for the eye to rest on but a broken sea and a dark tempestuous sky.

The Commander of her Majesty's cruizer, Captain Cuthbert Morris, just then came upon deck, casting a quick, comprehensive glance round and over his craft, then over the agitated water, and finally upon the thick masses of cloud driving before the blast. Turning to his lieutenant, a gentlemanly-looking man of about thirty years, he said—

"Mr. Haultight, this does not look very inviting. The gale is not down. We shall have a double dose of it to-night, by the look of the clouds."

"Not a doubt of it, sir," returned the lieutenant; "I was just going to propose to you, if you would think it better, to draw off the coast a few miles further, at least for the night."

"What may be our distance from the Mizen Head?" asked Captain Morris, looking towards the point where the said Head ought to be.

"Something more than five or six miles, sir," said the lieutenant; "I got a glimpse of Three Castle Head a few minutes ago."

"Well," returned the Commander of The William and Mary, "we may draw off three or four miles without losing the advantage we have."

The order was given, the foresheet let down, and the next instant the cutter was plunging her stout bows into the breaking seas, and casting their white spray over her deck. In less than an hour she reached the desired distance. The foresail was again hauled to windward; the watch was called, and everything being made as snug as possible, the captain and his lieutenant retired to the cabin to their supper, leaving the cutter in charge of the next in command.

"You are not exactly aware, Mr. Haultight," said Captain Morris, as they contrived, notwithstanding the heavy rolls of the cutter, at times, to make an excellent

supper, and were now enjoying a consoling glass of Holland, hot water, and sugar; "you are not exactly aware of the object of our visit to this coast. It is not alone the capture of this celebrated lugger, *The Warhawk*, but of a great political offender and his son—the latter commanding this fast vessel, *The Warhawk*. This notorious offender goes at present under the name of Fenwick, and is only hiding his deep designs under the guise of smuggling. He is said to have been the leader of those ferocious bands of rebels with O'Connor, of Glengariff, that committed such outrages in the west of Ireland in James's time, or rather at the period of his landing in Ireland. These men were disguised, they say, as King William's adherents. It is also thought, Fenwick is only an assumed name. He was afterwards known to be one of the conspirators joined to assassinate the late King William, and is now forming a conspiracy to bring back the Stuarts to the throne of Great Britain. He has held a commission in the Spanish service; and his son, whose feats aboard this craft, *The Warhawk*, are notorious for their daring, is even now, it is said, in the same service."

"What kind of a craft, sir, is this *Warhawk*?" asked the lieutenant.

Stretching his hand over to his desk, the captain took up a paper, and read aloud—"The *Warhawk* is a long, low craft, over one hundred and eighty tons burden, with a fine entrance, and a beautiful run aft; tremendous taunt spars—lugger, and, at times, schooner, rigged; her foremast further in-board than usual for a lugger; and her mizen-mast remarkably taunt, and the sail square. She carries six brass carronades, and a complement of eighty men; has papers, &c., hailing from a Spanish port, and carries Spanish colours."

"Rather a formidable craft for a smuggler, sir," said Mr. Haultight; "and one, if very fast, should we fall in with her, might give us some trouble to overhaul her."

"If we do not get within shot of her unawares, Mr. Haultight," said Captain Morris, "I'm afraid the William

and Mary, though a very fast vessel, will have something to do. I have information that both the Fenwicks are aboard the Warhawk this trip, and that she carries a very valuable cargo. Our pilots—the two we have aboard—say she is the fastest craft afloat, and that the crew would fight her sooner than yield to a Queen's cruiser."

"If we can only get within gun-shot," said the lieutenant, "we should cripple her."

"Ah! that would do," returned Captain Morris; "she was chased last year by the Racehorse brig for eight hours, during which, I am told, she never once set her main lug, and ran her out of sight."

All the night it blew a heavy gale from the south-west; but, towards morning, a deluge of rain shifted the wind in a moment into the north-west, rending the heavy masses of cloud asunder like magic, sweeping the fog and mist from the face of the deep, and showing the horizon to the north clear and beautiful, the sun rising and throwing its glorious beams, wintry as they were, over the agitated billows, which lashed each other in angry opposition, caused by the sudden shifting of the wind.

Though the weather had thus cleared, a seaman's practised eye could easily detect, or foresee, a speedy return of the same southerly gale, as soon as the squall from the north-west had blown itself out.

Captain Morris was upon deck, eagerly scanning the horizon with his glass, while all hands, also upon deck, were anxiously on the look-out, with their gaze bent upon the south-west quarter.

"There is a large bark, sir," said the lieutenant, "under jury masts, away to the south-east; and a large schooner working in for the land, but—"

"Strange sail in the sou'-west!" hailed a young midshipman who had gone aloft; "looks like a ship under her courses."

Captain Morris, after a time, made her out with his glass; and then, handing the glass to his lieutenant, he said—

"I think that craft looks like a lugger."

Mr. Haultight looked eagerly for several minutes.

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed he, "she's a lugger, and a very large lugger, sir, with three masts—her fore-lug and her mizen only set; and, by all that's good!" he added, after another glance, "she's coming up with the old wind blowing hard."

"That's our man, for a thousand pounds!" ejaculated Captain Morris, looking attentively at the advancing stranger. "This squall has nearly blown itself out. It lulls fast, and it's thickening up again. You see the south-west sea runs as fast as ever."

By the Commander's orders, the trysail was taken in, and the immense sail set with two reefs in it, and the jib shifted.

"How is the lugger standing now, Mr. Haultight?" inquired the captain.

"She appears to me, sir," replied the lieutenant, "to have altered her position a little. There's no doubt but this is the Warhawk—I see her three masts plainly, and her taunt and square mizen. She is making a direct course for Cape Clear."

"Very good," observed Captain Morris. "We must let her mistake us, if possible, for one of the large Northern cutters. Keep moving a-head, so as to cross her course, if we can, or at least get her within shot of our long eights."

All was now anxiety and preparation aboard the William and Mary; the guns were all shotted, and every man was at his post. The Queen's cruiser carried six long eight-pounders, and had a crew of a hundred and forty men.

In less than an hour the two vessels had approached within four miles of each other, when the William and Mary was taken aback with a sudden shift of wind. This gave a great advantage to the lugger. The wind now came in squalls, sometimes very heavy, then again a lull; while the scud blew in rapidly from seaward, the sea

increasing surprisingly—all evident tokens of a very heavy gale.

As yet the lugger seemingly paid no attention to the cutter, but came on steadily under her fore-lug and mizen, with a very heavy sea rapidly increasing; Captain Morris perceived that, with his double-reefed mainsail, he would not be able to cross the lugger's bows; a reef was, therefore, shaken out, though, as far as canvas was concerned, the William and Mary had quite sufficient in the squalls, that increased in force.

Watching her attentively with the glass, Mr. Haultight exclaimed to his commander—

"The lugger is hoisting her main-lug, and slightly altering her course. I fear she suspects us, sir—she is edging away."

Captain Morris took his glass, and, steadily regarding the lugger, perceived she was evidently keeping in a position so as to make all her sails draw; he saw clearly enough that she was remarkably fast, and carried her canvas in a surprising manner. Another reef was shaken out of the cutter's mainsail and foresail. The canvas she now carried made her stagger under its influence, and her mast bent with the immense pressure.

"I fear this Warhawk, sir, has the advantage of us in speed," observed the lieutenant. "We shall scarcely get within range the way she is now going. If we had her dead before the wind, we could carry our square-sail."

"I doubt it, Mr. Haultight—I doubt it. Our square-sail would bury us too much. At all events, if we are not within range we are near it. Let us try our distance, and hoist our pennant and colours—for it's very clear she knows what we are."

Up went the colours, and bang went the long eight, but fell short. Immediately after, a wreath of smoke burst from the side of the lugger, and the report of a brass carronade answered their eight-pounder.

"Confound the fellow's impudence! though his gun

was not shotted, but fired evidently in derision," said the lieutenant.

The two vessels were now within less than a mile and a half of each other, and so well had the lugger manœuvred, and her speed was so great, that both vessels were then running several points off the wind, shaping their course for Cape Clear, wind and sea rapidly increasing, and the squalls becoming dangerous from the quantity of canvas carried by both vessels.

While the crew of the William and Mary were intently watching the movements and manœuvres of the Warhawk, a violent and sudden squall tore over the face of the deep, driving the tops of the waves before it like a snow-drift, and burying the chaser and the chased in a cloud of mist.

For several moments the lugger was hidden in the drift. So violent and heavy was the squall, that Captain Morris was forced to ease the cutter during its fury, lowering their foresail, and hauling up the tack of the mainsail, the cutter plunging madly into the boiling sea.

"She's a deuce of a craft if she holds on in that squall," said Mr. Haultight, giving himself a shake to get rid of the shower-bath he had been favoured with.

Anxiously they watched the squall as it careered onwards; and presently the lugger emerged from the mist, driving before the blast, without a sail lowered, having increased considerably her distance.

"I see how it is, Mr. Haultight," said the captain. "That fellow will keep before us till nightfall, and then give us the slip. He drops us now, and out-carries us. She has immense beam, and is strong and well-handled."

Thus the two vessels continued running before the gale. Somehow the William and Mary seemed to gain, as they were forced to run more before the wind. By this time they were within four or five miles of the land, steering direct for Cape Clear; but the coast was fast disappearing in a dense fog, and the roar of the surf could be heard even at that distance, as it dashed against that iron-bound shore.

"Were it not for that sudden shift of wind, Mr. Haultight," said Captain Morris, "we should undoubtedly have crossed within five hundred yards of her. That sudden shift gave her a decided advantage."

"And she is sure to keep it, sir," responded the lieutenant, in a tone of great vexation.

They had now passed Cape Clear, and shortly the Seven Heads hove in sight, the wind veering more to the southward, and blowing violently, forcing the lugger to lower her main-rug, while the cutter (to save her mast) hauled up the tack of her mainsail, and eased her peak-halyards.

After passing the Seven Heads, the lugger continued running dead before the wind, though the whole line of coast soon became hid in a dense fog; so much so, that no sign of the old head of Kinsale could be seen. The cutter's mainsail tore her through the seas, and yet they gained not an inch on the chase, though only under her fore-lug, when, suddenly hoisting her mainsail with a couple of reefs in it, and at once altering her course, the Warhawk ran right into the tremendous Race off the old Head of Kinsale, and became completely lost to view in the mist and spray that hung over that formidable and much-dreaded Race of the tide, like a pall.

"I cannot take your vessel, your honour, through that channel," said the pilot, touching his hat, and addressing Captain Morris, who looked confounded at the sudden disappearance of the lugger.

"The devil!" exclaimed Mr. Haultight, "we do not draw more water than that lugger."

"The channel inside the Race is not fifty yards wide, your honour," rejoined the pilot; "and there are several rocks; besides, captain, there's a back channel, and with the wind this way, she could wear, and running round the Black Rocks, make for Courtmacherre, without your honour having a chance of seeing her in the dense fog along the shore."

There was no lighthouse at this period on the old Head of Kinsale; and on no part of the coast of Ireland does

there run a Race of tide so violent, or more dangerous than off the old Head.

It would have been risking her majesty's craft to run further in; therefore Captain Morris, though deeply chagrined, ordered the cutter's head to be turned seaward, and her mainsail lowered. Night was rapidly approaching, and so dense was the fog, that scarcely the length of the vessel was to be seen. To follow his invisible foe would, therefore, be madness.

"Confound that fellow," said Captain Morris, "he has led us a pretty dance. Perhaps he may have over-calculated his skill in clearing the Race, and is now ashore."

"No, your honour," said the pilot, who heard the observation, "no fear of him. He would run that channel blindfold; she's a mortal fast and wonderful craft, and he's a daring seaman, is her captain. He may have run between the Race of the Head, and the bluff Head itself. You might leap ashore on it, your honour. And then he had the whole sea clear before him, and perhaps may make a run for Bally Cotton, and land his cargo there. It's a famous place for running a craft full of smuggled goods into."

"We must gain a good offing, sir," said Mr. Haultight; "and to-morrow, if it clears, we can search all the coves and bays along this coast. He must run in somewhere."

"Yes; but do you see, Mr. Haultight, that though we may get hold of the lugger—and that I doubt—if she once makes a port or a landing, the two Fenwicks will escape; and thus the chief object of my being on this coast so long will be baffled. However, there is no help for it."

As the cutter turned her head seaward, they heard and felt the wild gusts rushing through her rigging with angry menace; while the spray, dashed from her bows as she plunged into the head seas, so as to gain a distance from the land, fell in sheets over her deck.

Having gained the desired distance, her majesty's cruizer was hove-to, to take her rest for the night, shrouded in the mist that lay heavy over sea and land.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN our last chapter, we left her Majesty's cruiser the William and Mary lying off the Head — the Old Head, as it is styled — of Kinsale, on which now stands a noble lighthouse, making the chances of shipwreck and disasters infinitely less than at the period of our story.

Leaving the cruiser for the present, we request our readers to step with us on board the lugger, the Warhawk.

This vessel, for several years, had baffled every attempt either to take her or condemn her as a smuggler. The contraband trade in Anne's reign, and long after, was carried on, on the coast of Ireland, with an audacity and success unparalleled. The numerous extraordinary coves and intricate channels having entrances blocked up by rocks and islands intersecting the entire coast of Ireland from the old Head of Kinsale to the Island of Valencia, afforded every facility for the running of cargoes, and for the concealment of the smugglers and even their vessels. The cruisers on the coast were very few: they appeared only at intervals, and were all dull sailers. The guard upon the coast was rarely diligent; and for miles upon miles, no watch at all was kept. From the Seven Heads to Bantry, the coast was thinly populated, and scarcely cultivated; the inhabitants eagerly joining in all smuggling transactions.

The Warhawk was decidedly the handsomest and fastest craft ever employed in the trade — she was built in a Spanish port, by Irish speculators — no expense was spared in her construction, or arming; and her crew were picked men. These men and commander swore they would never surrender their cargo, as long as the Warhawk could keep above water.

As the Warhawk came within sight of the Kerry coast,

on her voyage home (her destination being a well-known cove to the eastward of the old Head of Kinsale, and just round its bluff and bold promontory) the crew caught sight of the Queen's cruiser.

The commander of the Warhawk, a tall, handsome man, about eight-and-twenty years old, brought his glass to bear upon the cutter. After a moment's steady regard, he turned to a stout, jovial-looking individual, who was steering the lugger, and, with a laugh, said—

"There is a wolf that wants to be taken for a lamb."

"What is she, captain?" asked the pilot. "She looks a large-sized sloop."

"She's a revenue or Queen's cruiser, and she's shifting her trysail and getting up her mainsail. She has made us out; and I fancy some information has been given of our coming, for she has been lying-to during the night, no doubt. She has the wind Nor-west — a squall that will soon be over. We shall carry this gale on with us, which will spoil her sport."

"Musha, does he think his ould tub could keep company with the Warhawk?" asked the pilot.

"No," replied the commander; "I am not thinking of that, Mahony; but you see, we must try and get rid of this cutter, which seems to be a very fine craft, before night-fall. This gale will freshen from the shift of wind; and, if I am not mistaken, we shall have a dense fog before night. See, how low and thick the scud comes in. Now, your plan, Mahony, will be to keep manœuvring the cutter, till we can make a run for the old Head, so as to hit the spot about night-fall. We will then push in for the Race, where the cruiser will never dare to follow, supposing she has legs to keep up with us; then run through the Gut, and there's an end of her."

"Let me alone, captain," said the pilot. "By jabers, I'll lead him a purty dance, and let him get within smell of us, just to keep him lively."

The reader has seen how the chase was managed, till the lugger, suddenly hoisting her main-lug, altered her

course, and ran in amid the terrible, tumbling sea of the Race. As the vessel plunged amid the boiling surf, a flood of water burst over her low, flush deck, which would certainly have made free with some of the crew, had they not been prepared for such a contingency. After rolling and plunging fearfully amid the breakers—every rope and sail strained to its utmost—the lugger ran through the very narrow channel between the Race and the old Head, where the water was comparatively smooth.

The two hardy seamen at the tiller shook themselves with a reckless laugh, saying—

“Faix, boys, that was as good as a shower-bath, any day. Good bye to her Majesty’s barky; for, be me soul, for an ould tub she aint a bad one for speed. What a purty night she’ll have of it!”

“Have a care, Mahony, have a care,” said the Captain of the lugger. “You are threading a needle with a very ugly eye to it.”

“Oh, faix, never fear, sir,” rejoined the Pilot; “I’m wide awake. I’ll put you close enough to jump ashore, if needs be. I’m shaving the ould Head as close as ever a barber cropped a poll. They’ll never follow us here. No, devil a fear of them. The cutter would be in bits in half an hour if they attempted to cross the Race in this gale, and not knowing which way to steer when through. Lower the lug! Lower away, handsome!” shouted the pilot, as they rounded the Head, and a tremendous squall over the top, bent the Warhawk, with her bulwarks under the flood. The lug was lowered and secured in a moment.

It was now dark; and what with the dense fog and violent squalls, the passage round the Head could only have been attempted by men as daring and reckless as those on board the Warhawk; for so very close did they run to the bluff Head that the dash of the waves against the rocks was thrown back upon their own decks. She was then carefully, and under very easy sail, worked into a deep indentation of the Coast, about seven or eight miles from the mouth of Kinsale Harbour.

This Cove was, at the period of our tale, surrounded by land, wild and uncultivated, and with scarcely a habitation to be seen for miles, being separated by the Bandon river from the more cultivated and populous part of the county. Within this Cove the Warhawk let go her anchor in three fathom water, as still as a milk-pond, though the gusts over the land fell heavy and frequent, with a loud roar as they rushed through the rigging, and over the still water, and then died away in the distance.

As the lugger swung to her anchor, a bright crimson flame was burned over the bows of the vessel, and then it was extinguished, and all became wrapt in the profound darkness of the night, the rain, at the same time, descending in torrents. Scarcely five minutes elapsed, before a similar flame was seen by the anxious crew, not a hundred yards from them, on the sandy beach of the Cove.

"Come, by Jove, that's hitting the time and place to a nicety," said the Captain of the Warhawk, rubbing his hands. "Now, lads, out with the boats. A couple of hours will do our business here, and I shall leave you, Mahony, in charge of the craft for the rest of the night. In the morning, you can run in for the Cove of Cork. Your papers are all right; and this cargo, consigned to Cooper and Briscoe, will be taken charge of there — so now let us be active."

The two large boats of the lugger, built purposely for discharging her contraband cargo, were soon floating alongside; and in an incredible short period were loaded to the very gunnel.

The shore was speedily reached. As soon as the sound of her boat's keel grated on the shingly beach, some ten or a dozen men rushed into the water to meet the smugglers.

"Musha then; glory be! Here you are! Long life and more power to you. Faix, ye have had a fine time of it."

Then followed shaking of hands; and many a joke and laugh; though every individual present was soaked to the skin.

"Come, come, boys, no blarney," said the Captain. "Work is the word. Start that small keg, and pass the can round. Then let me see you all off like a pack of beagles."

"Aigh, aigh, sir, I'll start him," said a man with a lantern and a huge piece of iron, like a crow-bar, driving, as he spoke, the head of the cask in. It was brandy; and the can was passed round to the great delight of the men.

After this the work went on swimmingly; and, in a wonderfully short time, the boat's cargo was transferred to the backs of several horses, and some harnessed to a kind of cart without wheels.

Before two hours had passed, the place was quite deserted by boats, smugglers and assistants; leaving only the commander and his particular attendant, Darby Mc'Grath, standing on the spot.

For a moment or two, William Fenwick stood listening; but all was still, save the roar of the blast, and the thunder of the sea breaking on the rocks without the Cove.

"All right, Darby," said the captain, turning round to his man, who was squeezing the last drop from the keg. "Now let us push on across the moor, for the old Tower of Kilgobben. We have made a nice thing of it."

"Be me conscience, you may say that, Master William. There will be nice pickings for the owners of the Warhawk."

"Well, push on, now the work's done; this rain and cold wind is not pleasant. It will be daylight before we get to the creek. I wonder if the punt's there; or did they forget, in the hurry, to leave her at this side?"

"Ould Bill is sure to have left her there, and the paddles," returned Darby; leading the way across a most bleak and dismal track of land; and just as a dull, miserable, wet November morning broke, they reached the edge of a small creek—the waters of which empty themselves into the Bandon river.

"Faix, here's the punt, sure enough!" said Darby

M'Grath ; and then, from a great mass of tall rushes, he pulled out a pair of short oars.

William Fenwick jumped into the punt, while Darby cast off the chain, and, taking the oars, he pulled rapidly down the creek, and into the broader waters of the river Bandon—which runs into the harbour of Kinsale, and thence reaches the sea about five miles below the town. It was strong flood tide. Pulling with the stream, they ran the boat ashore, under the old Tower of Kilgobben.

Within a hundred yards of the tower, there was then standing a two-story building. It had been a slated house ; but the slates had gradually disappeared ; and, as they vanished, they were replaced with any substitutes at hand, however unsuitable to the purpose the latter might have been. The windows, woefully deficient of glass, were patched with paper, old rags, and an old hat. These make-shifts served, in some degree, to keep out wind and rain, and also to exclude light. Both sides of the noble river were, at this period, woefully deficient in the slightest appearance of agricultural labour. Thinly, and widely-scattered, were the habitations of the peasantry ; and, as to resident gentry, there was not one nearer than the immediate vicinity of Bandon or Kinsale. There was an air of desolation and ruin—of poverty and neglect—around the house and ground.

As soon as the captain of the Warhawk, and his attendant, Darby, approached the house, the loud baying of fierce dogs was heard, and instantly, two brutes, leaping over the low broken wall of the yard, flew at the intruders, as they supposed them ; but an oath and a kick, from Darby, drove them back. At the noise made by the dogs, a window was thrown open, and a head—ornamented with a remarkably dirty cap—was thrust forth, and a voice—not very remarkable for its dulcet properties—cried out—

“Och, and be me conscience, I'm pleased to see you return, Darby, jewel ; and you, too, Mr. William.”

“Don't stand chattering there, ye omadaun, but come

down and open the door," said Darby, looking up to his better half. "You have a tongue as long as an eel, and, by Jabers, quite as slippery."

"Oh, ye're a beauty yourself, Darby dear," exclaimed the head; "but I'll open the door in a jiffy."

"Has my father returned, Peggy?" demanded William Fenwick, as the woman with the soiled cap, but very good-looking face, opened the door.

"Troth, he has, Master William, these three days; and sure it's mighty anxious entirely he was to see you safe back from this voyage."

"Well, here I am, Peggy, safe and sound, at all events," returned the captain of the lugger, entering; "but is he in the house now?"

"He is; that is, he *was* an hour or two ago," said Peggy; "but he rode over to Innishannon, saying as how he would be back to-night or to-morrow, that's to-day, for it's yesterday he went away, now I think of it."

"Bother the woman," said Darby; "her head was never the clearest."

"Och, faith, it's clear enough, Darby, jewel. The master said, if he weren't back without being caught, it would be a bad job: he could wait no longer."

"Humph!" muttered William Fenwick, what's in the wind now, I wonder?" So saying, he passed through a dilapidated passage, and unlocking a side-door, entered a room differing very widely from the others. This room led into another, a sleeping chamber. The sitting-room was comfortably furnished: it had a carpet, and a book-case, with many volumes on its shelves. On a table were scattered several charts, compasses, and pieces of music. A keyed flute and a violin hung, with a few marine pictures, against the papered walls. Altogether, there was a look of civilised life and comfort, irreconcilable with the exterior of the house.

"Now, Peggy," said William Fenwick, "stir yourself; light a fire here, and get me some breakfast."

Then, entering the other room, he soon got rid of his

soaked and rough seaman's attire. Divested of this, and dressed in a plain suit, such as was worn by gentlemen of easy circumstances, William Fenwick appeared an exceedingly handsome young man, having no trace whatever, in his fine and regular features, of the wild and reckless character of his present life.

On returning to the sitting-room, he found a good blazing fire, and preparations making for a substantial breakfast, which proved that Peggy had other active members besides her tongue.

William Fenwick had scarcely commenced his breakfast, before the sound of a horse's feet caused him to look out from the window, when he beheld his father ride up to the door, and give his horse to Darby. The next moment he entered the room, seemingly much heated and disturbed.

Throwing himself into a chair, and wiping his brow, he said—

"This is a lucky turn of Fortune's wheel, William. By Heaven! I was afraid The Warhawk would have been taken, and your person secured."

"Ha! How is that, father?" exclaimed the son, filling a cup of chocolate, and pushing it over to his sire. "How could you have known we were chased?"

"The devil!" exclaimed the elder Fenwick, raising his huge eyebrows; "then you *were* chased? I was only imagining you *might* be. Well, you are a favourite of that capricious jade, William."

"But you have some news, I see," rejoined the young man; "for you look agitated, father. Is he dead?" And he looked his father anxiously in the face. "If he is," added he, "my worthy cousin steps into a princely fortune."

"If you had not your father to work for you, William, such might be the case," replied the elder Fenwick; "but you have guessed rightly. The Baronet *is* dead. Your cousin, however, will not succeed to the estates."

"The devil he won't!" rejoined the young man, a little astonished. "How is that?"

"Ah, that will be explained hereafter," answered the elder Fenwick; "at present our object is to get out of this country as privately, and, mind you, as rapidly as possible. Why, you seem alarmed."

"All's right, father; the Warhawk's papers are not to be questioned."

"Yes, yes," impatiently interrupted Mr. Fenwick; "it's no question about the Warhawk now; but, let me tell you, if we linger here twelve hours longer, we shall be found board and lodging in Cork jail. I am not joking. You call my projects mad ones; and yet they have fully and completely succeeded."

"Very good," said the son, coolly sipping his chocolate; "but touching that lodging in Cork jail. What has led to such a comfortable perspective, since the Warhawk has nothing to do with it? She cannot be caught with a contraband cargo, for that was landed and stowed away before daylight."

"Nevertheless," said the father, "there are two English officers of the Government now in Cork; and before night they will be here to apprehend us—or, rather *me*—as a political offender. They have had accurate information, and a faithful description of our persons; but our real names are safe. The name of Fenwick we must drop from this hour. I have also had information that officers are sent to different ports, and that a Queen's cruizer is on the coast—the same, I suppose, which you escaped from. Now, then, attend to my projects. We must destroy all documents we have here that might give a clue to those who will assuredly search for us. Even Darby and his wife must be left in total ignorance of our final departure; they must imagine we are only going to Bandon, and will return as usual. I have arranged with Greene concerning our shares in the Warhawk."

"Nay, father," interrupted the son, "in every thing else, I am willing to follow your plans and projects. But my half of the Warhawk, I will not resign. I will give

up the command for a time, till we see how your scheme prospers. It will then be time enough to decide."

The elder Fenwick thought for a moment with a somewhat uneasy expression of countenance; but then, looking up more cheerfully, he said—

"Be it so. Of us and of our future proceedings, they can know nothing. Your wish in this matter can, therefore, be gratified without hazard. You will soon find how useless it will be to incur even a remote risk. Once across the Channel and landed on the English coast, we may defy discovery."

For two hours after this conversation, father and son were actively employed in destroying letters, papers, &c. Even books were consigned to the flames.

Satisfied even if the strictest investigation was made by the most cunning searchers, that nothing would be discovered against them, the father and son changed their attire; and, telling Darby and his wife to keep a sharp look out in case any hunt should be made after the cargo landed the preceding night, said they were going to Innishannon; and, mounting the two horses kept in the establishment, left the place.

Taking a road across the country, well known to the elder Fenwick, they reached Timoleague. Here Mr. Fenwick procured a man to take the horses on to a farm, held by a person with whom he had been connected for years. Finally, they procured a passage across from Glandore to Milford Haven, in a Welsh sloop, and thence proceeded to London, where we leave them for the present.

CHAPTER XVII.

ABOUT three months after the departure of the Fenwicks from the tower of Kilgobben, Mr. Briefless, the lawyer,

was sitting in rather a melancholy mood, and immersed in thought. He had not recovered the shock inflicted on him by the sudden demise of his old friend, Sir Hugh Granville; added to which astounding misfortune was the unexpected event that followed; for no will, or copy of a will, could be found. The lawyer's thoughts were in a sad state of perplexity: he became absent in mind, and restless.

Mr. Briefless passed half the mornings pacing his library, muttering all kinds of strange sentences. The few words his housekeeper caught at times frightened her. "There's villany at work!" Altogether, master and housekeeper were sadly out of sorts.

On the morning already alluded to, the lawyer had proceeded earlier than usual to his library, and soon began turning over several bundles of deeds and letters, anxiously looking for one particular document, for which purpose it was necessary to read part of the greater number. In the midst of this unpaid occupation, Thomas, the factotum, entered the room with letters.

"Ha, here it is at last!" exclaimed the lawyer, selecting an epistle with a foreign post-mark. "What a dilatory mode of correspondence! Three months before I can get an answer to my letter! Very good, indeed!"

He then opened the letter which, as he well knew, was from Sir Gerald Granville. He read the contents slowly and attentively; read it again; folded it up, and placed it carefully aside, muttering to himself—"By Jove, the boy's mad, that's clear! Prefers being shot at by a parcel of fools, who pocket sixpence a day and eat bad food for committing wholesale murder, to returning home, enjoying a princely fortune, and doing good to his fellow creatures. What the devil has *he* to do with the Dutch? Humph! They are the only gainers by this war. He'll get tired of it, though, or get shot."

"No, God forbid!" exclaimed the little lawyer aloud, and jumping to his feet, as a very smart double knock was heard at the street door.

Thomas shortly entered, saying—

"There is a Mr. Greathead below, sir, who wishes particularly to see you, if not engaged."

"Greathead!" repeated the lawyer, "nobody in these parts of that name. Show him up, Thomas—show him up. Greathead!—curious name. I wonder if he has a big head. These names always take their rise from—"

He had no time to finish his sentence, for Thomas ushered the stranger into the library.

Mr. Briefless, after a rapid glance over the stranger's person, which was far from pleasing, bowed, and requested him to be seated, saying—

"Mr. Greathead, I presume."

The stranger bowed profoundly, and smiled. The smile made the lawyer start. He rubbed his hand, as if cold, and sat down.

Mr. Briefless was a short man, but nearly as broad as he was long. Now the stranger was rather shorter, and so very thin, that, as the worthy lawyer afterwards declared, he felt satisfied if he stood between him and the light, he could have seen through him. There was nothing very remarkable in his head, except that, contrary to the fashion of the period, he wore neither wig nor powder, but his grizzled, short hair curled like a poodle dog's. The peculiar expression of the stranger's mouth was attributable to the excessive thinness of his lips; so that when he smiled the effect was as if a livid streak had been drawn across the face from ear to ear. He was, however, well dressed in the very ugly mode of Queen Anne's reign.

"Very fine morning, Mr. Briefless," began the stranger, seating himself.

The lawyer cast a glance at the window, saw it was a raw bleak day in March, and replied—

"Very."

"I have waited on you, Mr. Briefless," said Mr. Greathead, "on what will, I fear, appear to you unpleasant business. But, first, allow me to say—I am a lawyer—

and reside in London. I wait on you, Mr. Briefless, on the part of Sir William Granville O'Grady."

Mr. Briefless started from his chair, while the stranger's mouth underwent a most singular change, one corner turning straight up towards the left eye.

"Sir William Granville O'Grady!" echoed Mr. Briefless. "I know no such person—never did—there is no such person."

The stranger smiled a ghastly smile, which made our Irish lawyer shudder.

"Don't be too hasty, Mr. Briefless," rejoined the stranger. "I told you my business would be unpleasant. Still, as you say, it *is* business."

"Curse you and your business, and your hideous mouth too," inwardly ejaculated Mr. Briefless.

"Tax your memory," pursued Mr. Greathead; "and you will find that you formerly knew, or at least heard of, a Mr. William O'Grady, who, about nine-and-twenty years ago, married the eldest—eldest mind you—daughter of the late Sir Vrance Granville, of Granville Castle, Ireland."

"Why, the man was drowned, and the truly unfortunate lady that fled her father's roof with him, met the same fate," retorted Mr. Briefless.

"Ha, very good, indeed," rejoined the stranger, "I thought, my dear Sir, your memory was too good to lead you astray. The gentleman to whom you now allude is the father of my client, Sir William Granville O'Grady. Mr. O'Grady, I am most happy to inform you, did not perish at sea, as was supposed. Being a soldier—perhaps you are not aware that he was an officer in the Spanish service—he adopted what he styled a *ruse-de-guerre*, that is, his servant, who had a young wife, embarked, attired like his master, in the *Mary of Dunmore*—which craft, as you are aware, was wrecked on the Salter's, and every soul perished. Captain O'Grady, on the other hand, proceeded to Wexford, where he was married by a Catholic priest, sailed for

Carnarvon, in Wales, and *there*, Mr. Briefless," and the London lawyer looked unutterable things, "and *there* was married by a clergyman of the same persuasion as his wife. One child, a son, my present client, was born, and his birth most unfortunately caused the death of his mother."

Mr. Briefless sat like one turned to stone. He did not doubt the truth of what Mr. Greathead stated, because he felt that no impostor would be likely to attempt so daring and impossible a fraud. Besides, running rapidly over in his mind the events of years back, he remembered that a terrible watch had been kept upon the Granville family. But what he thought he kept to himself, and, after a long and painful pause, said—

"That I should be astonished, Mr. Greathead, you will not wonder. That a person supposed dead for nine-and-twenty years, should suddenly make his appearance, and produce his son as the heir to a noble inheritance, appears most strange and mysterious."

"And yet, Mr. Briefless," replied the London lawyer, speaking gently and with a soothing tone, "when explained, it will all appear extremely simple and natural. Pursued by Sir Vrance Granville and his son with unrelenting animosity—"

"You are wrong, sir," interrupted Mr. Briefless; "the late lamented Baronet followed them, in company with his father, to save and intercede for a beloved sister, not to persecute or molest, as you insinuate."

"I ask your pardon, Mr. Briefless," returned the London lawyer; "my client knew not that. He knew he was pursued, but he could not know with what feelings on the part of Sir Hugh. He was, nevertheless, thoroughly aware of the fierce hatred entertained towards him by his bride's father. The death of Mrs. O'Grady, which took place in Jersey, where his son was born, put an end for ever of hoping for a reconciliation. We have no business to inquire how Captain O'Grady

passed the nine-and-twenty years ; he was supposed dead, and without fortune or even remote kindred. I believe he lived during that period entirely abroad."

As the London lawyer spoke, his piercing eyes rested with a searching expression on the face of his companion. Mr. Briefless was, however, summoning all his energies to meet the crisis that was coming ; and he bore the gaze of his brother-lawyer unshrinkingly.

"Now, Mr. Briefless," continued Mr. Greathead, "my client, Sir William Granville O'Grady—for, of course, the title goes, at all events, to the child of the eldest sister—my client, I say, claims the entire Granville estates and property, amounting, including Castle Granville and Innismoyle, to, I believe, fourteen thousand a year. A noble property, Mr. Briefless, a noble property. Besides this, the late Sir Hugh Granville purchased for twenty-three thousand pounds the estate of Deer Hurst, in Oxfordshire, worth, let us suppose, one thousand a year. Sir Hugh also possessed, in India bonds and other securities, over eighty thousand pounds. Now, with the funds arising from these, my client, Sir William, thought he had nothing to do, as it was Sir Hugh's own personal property, and, of course, he willed it to his favourite nephew, Mr. Gerald Granville. Having, however, heard a report that no will could be found after the strictest search, my client puts in his claim for the whole property, and it will hardly be denied that he is perfectly justified in doing so."

A short silence ensued. Mr. Briefless would admit nothing.

"Am I right," at length resumed the London Lawyer, "in saying that no will or other document exists to frustrate my client's claims ? As the late Sir Hugh's confidential friend and law-adviser, and the holder of all the papers, documents, deeds, &c., of the Granville family, I, of course, as in law bound, apply to you."

Mr. Briefless, for several moments, was plunged in deep and most painful thought. To the Granville property,

there could be no doubt that, supposing all the proper documents were brought forward, the son of the eldest daughter of Sir Vrance Granville was unquestionably heir-at-law. Still, Mr. Briefless determined, in his own mind, that every kind of opposition should be thrown in the way of Sir William's succeeding to the personal possessions of the late Sir Hugh. Eighty thousand pounds spent—supposing the existence of fraud, as the lawyer suspected, in the disappearance of Sir Hugh's will—would be eighty thousand pounds gone for ever. They might enjoy the Granville estates; but then they were safe. They would not spend more than the actual rental; nor could they encumber the entail. After letting these thoughts run through his brain, Mr. Briefless cautiously replied—

“What you have urged, Mr. Greathead, may be strictly true. I have nothing now to say; except, that it is very extraordinary, and very mysterious. There is one thing, however, which the law will decide, (of course every species of document and proof will be demanded); for I tell you, candidly—” Here our little friend was forced to close his eyes, for a moment, the mouth of Mr. Greathead performing such a series of contortions as actually to confound him. “I tell you, candidly,” at length, resumed Mr. Briefless, “that I will oppose your client step by step; and maintain, till forced to surrender, that my client, Sir Gerald Granville—for such he is till proved to the contrary—is the real and undoubted heir of the late Sir Hugh Granville. I drew up his will, myself, sir,” continued Mr. Briefless, getting a little excited. “The late Sir Hugh loved his nephew as a son; he knew of no other nephew existing; he could have had no motive whatever, in destroying his will. I saw my lamented friend two days before his death; and we were on such terms of friendship that I feel perfectly satisfied, had the Baronet only meditated destroying his will, he would have mentioned it.”

“Very likely—very likely, indeed,” replied Mr. Great-

head. "Still, there is no accounting for the changes of the human mind. Was there not a secretary of Sir Hugh's? Might not he know something of the Baronet's affairs of which you were not cognizant? Are you sure of his honesty?"

"Sir," replied the little lawyer, "Mr. Gardener is a man of strict integrity: he is even more astonished than I am: he has lost a very handsome annuity; that is, if your client proves his case; for though the document may be destroyed, or *made away with*—" and Mr. Briefless pronounced the last words with an emphasis—"yet, the annuity which I knew was left to Mr. Gardener, will be made good."

"Very generous indeed," returned Mr. Greathead. "Still, I should be sorry that Sir Gerald Granville, besides being deprived of the noble property he was always led to imagine would be his, should, out of his small means, be induced to fulfil the supposed wishes of the late Sir Hugh. And I feel satisfied that Mr. William Granville O'Grady—should his case prove successful—will make it a point to carry out his uncle's wishes with respect to legacies, &c., to domestics, and those whose long service merited a token of remembrance. I will detain you no longer, Mr. Briefless; we shall meet hereafter, when supporting our respective clients. I have done what my client considered it my duty to do, in waiting upon you—I now take my leave. All the necessary documents, certificates of birth, marriage, &c., shall be forthcoming at the proper time. I wish you a very good morning."

Having thus expressed himself, the mouth of Mr. Greathead presented the most singular appearance it had yet assumed; the under-lip lapped over the upper till it touched the nose; and then, suddenly changing, the enormous mouth became no smaller than a child's when whistling.

"God bless my soul!" muttered Mr. Briefless, as he started back. But mastering his emotion, he rang a small

silver bell, standing on the table, and then wished Mr. Greathead good morning.

Thomas showed the London lawyer out, and then the door closed, leaving our little friend in a perfect state of bewilderment.

Mr. Briefless spent the four following days arranging various papers and documents, so as to be ready for the important trial that was to take place on the first of the ensuing month.

On the day when the judgment was to be delivered, both Captain O'Grady and son were present. It was with intense interest that Mr. Briefless gazed at his formidable opponents. Captain O'Grady was at this time in his fifty-sixth year, of a tall and portly stature. He had evidently been a remarkably handsome man; was richly and fashionably attired, and wore an immense peruke; but his face was entirely destitute of beard, being closely and carefully divested of that appendage. The son was even taller than the father; he wore his hair without powder; so profuse were his whiskers and mustachios that scarcely a particle of his face was visible except his very dark and brilliant eyes. He was attired in a rich Spanish uniform, and bore altogether a manly and distinguished appearance and demeanour.

Captain O'Grady was closely attended by the lawyer with the formidable mouth. The authenticity of the documents produced by Captain O'Grady could not be denied. He distinctly proved his own identity, his two marriage certificates, certificates of birth, his wife's death, and the surgeon's certificate of the birth of a son. So clear, indeed, was the documentary evidence, that Mr. Briefless and the other lawyers employed on his side, made no efforts to put it aside. Mr. Harmer, the late Sir Hugh's domestic chaplain, was also present, and watched with keen anxiety the manner and appearance of William Granville O'Grady. Notwithstanding the lapse of years—despite the change from boyhood to manhood—the addition of whiskers and mustachios, Mr.

Harmer was firmly of opinion that, in William Granville O'Grady, he beheld the boy attempted to be passed upon Sir Hugh as his nephew, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice.

Still this knowledge was of no manner of use. Even if proved, it could not upset his claims to the title and property of the Baronet.

Mr. Briefless and his brother lawyers admitted that they were satisfied as to the proofs brought before them; and therefore Captain O'Grady's son was duly acknowledged to be the heir to the Granville estates and title. But with respect to the estate purchased by the Baronet in Oxfordshire, and the eighty thousand pounds in Indian bonds and other Indian securities, Mr. Briefless had a document to prove that the late Sir Hugh Granville's nephew, Gerald Granville, was the real and undoubted heir to that estate and money.

The speech of Mr. Briefless in support of this claim caused a considerable sensation in Court. Captain O'Grady started to his feet, while his face, before flushed, became pale. Sir William's dark eyes flashed, as they fixed themselves upon the face of the little lawyer; while the mouth of Mr. Greathead actually astonished the whole Court by its strange contortions.

The little lawyer, nevertheless, stood his ground firmly; he looked Captain O'Grady full in the face, and paid no attention to the fierce frown of the son; but he carefully avoided his brother lawyer with the formidable feature. Taking from a green bag a folded parchment, he opened it, and read to the silent and attentive Court, a deed of gift of the estate of Deer Hurst, in Oxfordshire, and the entire sum of eighty thousand pounds, invested in Indian securities. Then followed the late Sir Hugh's reasons for making this gift during his life. In the deed, he stated that a wish, during his life, to render his nephew totally independent of him, arose from a strange feeling that had oppressed him for years, owing to an impostor having been palmed upon him as his nephew, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. A feeling of security, with respect to the

Granville property, hung over his mind, haunted by a presentiment that, notwithstanding having made his will entirely in favour of his nephew, Gerald, he had resolved on this deed of gift, which was to be presented to his nephew immediately he returned from Flanders. This deed, executed during a short visit he made to Castle Granville about twelve months before his death, was drawn by Mr. Briefless, and witnessed by two gentlemen of the city of Cork, then in Court, and ready to swear to their signatures, and to the validity of the deed which had been read to them. Mr. Briefless stated that he had misplaced this deed, and, for three months, had been baffled in his search for it. But, strange to say, he had found it on a shelf in his own library four days ago.

A profound silence reigned through the Court as the lawyer made this statement, and then handed up the deed to his Lordship, the presiding Judge.

"There can be no question concerning this document," said the judge. "Where are the two gentlemen whose names are attached to the instrument."

"They are here, my lord," said Mr. Briefless, motioning the two witnesses to come forward.

Mr. Hull and Mr. M'Grath, two merchants of high respectability and fortune of the city of Cork, were then sworn. On being questioned with respect to the deed, their answers proved they were perfectly acquainted with the contents of the document. They, moreover, attested their signatures.

"This is a very simple, straightforward document, gentlemen," said the judge, addressing the lawyers acting on the part of Sir William Granville O'Grady. "Have you any thing to say against its validity?"

Captain O'Grady had, for the last few minutes, been eagerly conversing with his lawyers. When the judge spoke, they became silent, and then their leading counsel said—

"Nothing whatever, my lord."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DURING the events recorded in our last chapters, Gerald Granville pursued his military career with ardour and distinction. At the famous battle of Blenheim, Prince Eugene was thrice repulsed in a fierce attack upon the enemy, when the dragoons, under the command of our hero, came rapidly over the field, and, joining the Prince, again made a furious charge upon the enemy, and swept them from their position. This was the last charge for the day; for that formidable position being carried, the enemy gave way on every side.

In the midst of victory, whilst riding by the side of the Prince, who was warmly returning him thanks for his splendid and most masterly charge, a random shot struck Gerald Granville from his horse.

"Not seriously wounded, I trust in God!" said the Prince eagerly, as O'Regan and two of the attendants of his highness threw themselves from their horses, while another rode off for the Prince's own surgeon.

"God forbid we should lose so good a soldier! No nobler spirit rode the field this day," added Prince Eugene, as they bore our insensible hero to his tent.

"I trust his wound is not mortal, your highness," returned General Vandermere; "for we owe the success of this last charge to his judicious and able assistance."

Colonel Granville's wound, though severe, was fortunately not dangerous. Through the skilful treatment of the Prince's surgeon, in three weeks he was able to leave his couch. He was then residing in Hochstadt, the Duke of Marlborough having returned to England.

Rejoicing in his master's recovery, O'Regan presented him some letters that had been forwarded from England, after much delay on the way. His faithful attendant allowed him to be sufficiently recovered before giving the

letters, fearing they might agitate him. Gerald was perfectly astounded at their contents. One was from his excellent friend, Mr. Harmer; the others from Mr. Briefless. They gave a full account of all that had occurred—tidings so fatal to his interest. The whole affair was so singularly mysterious, that it plunged him into a maze of conjecture and painful thought. Mr. Harmer stated in his letter that it was his solemn conviction that in Sir William O'Grady he beheld the very boy who formerly was passed upon Sir Hugh as his nephew, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. He felt assured that some deep villany had for years been at work, and that his uncle's will had been made away with in some mysterious way, which Providence would yet bring to light. Mr. Harmer added that he had been present at the trial. He had expected to see Mr. Gardener in court on that occasion, but learned he was in a very depressed state of mind ever since Sir Hugh's death, and was then suffering from a severe attack of paralysis. Much kind advice, and other matters were in the letter; and Gerald for a time remained buried in the memory of the past.

At length, resolved not to torture his mind with a mystery he could not expect to unravel, he sat down to write and communicate his wishes to Mr. Briefless. He begged the worthy lawyer to make good every legacy intended by his generous uncle to be paid to his servants, and other faithful dependents; also the annuity to Mr. Gardener; to send Mrs. O'Regan (a most kind and worthy woman) and her family over to Deer Hurst as housekeeper, and to retain all the servants in that establishment on the same footing. He also informed Mr. Briefless that he had hopes of regaining his paternal property of Glandore Abbey. The Duke of Marlborough had promised to exert his great influence with the Queen to have the attainders against the Fitzmaurice estates reversed.

Gerald soon regained strength, and the Duke having given him permission to serve under Prince Eugene, at

the Prince's particular request, he set out at once to join his highness.

At this time all Savoy was conquered by the French. Susa, Pignerol, and other fortresses of Piedmont, were reduced by their arms; and, in the end, the Duke of Vendome laid siege to Victor Amadeus himself, in his own capital. This was the great crisis of the Italian war. During this contest the colonel again signalized himself. When the king contrived to escape from Turin, Gerald, with a party of cavalry, saved the monarch from being retaken by the enemy; for which service he was personally thanked by the king, invested with the order of —, and created a Count.

Prince Eugene, having received great reinforcements from Germany, advanced upon Turin. The French army was totally defeated, and finally forced to evacuate Italy.

Prince Eugene loaded the colonel with orders and enconiums, wished to attach him to himself, and offered him the rank of a general officer. But Gerald had a strong wish to return to England; and, feeling his old wound a little troublesome, he resolved to take up his quarters in Turin for the ensuing winter, and return to England in the spring.

Having passed the latter part of the summer in Switzerland, he proceeded towards the end of September to Turin. The termination of the war had restored peace to unhappy Italy; and, in a short time after, her cities were again the centre of attraction to numerous visitors from all parts of Europe. At Turin, he found at a banker's the funds he had requested Mr. Briefless to lodge there, and also some letters. The worthy lawyer stated that Sir William Granville O'Grady continued to reside in London—an agent being appointed over the Irish estates, to the great disgust and rage of the tenantry, who never ceased lamenting the change of owners.

Gerald Granville rapidly recovered health and his usual strength; and, one day, was greatly surprised when he heard the name of the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone

mentioned as one of the English residents in Turin. Although five years—passed in the excitement and turmoil of war—had elapsed since he had seen the Atherstones, the colonel had by no means forgotten the young and beautiful somnambulist. He had often, in the solitude of his tent, when wearied and exhausted, allowed his mind to dwell on the past scenes; and, amid the many images that floated through his brain, that of the fair and lovely girl would present itself to his imagination.

Our hero allowed his mind but seldom to dwell on the singular event that had deprived him of a title and a home that he loved so well—for the scenes around Castle Granville were dear to his memory; but he thought, at times, of the strange mystery that enveloped the fate of his elder brother, and the murder of his grandfather. He often thought it possible that Cuthbert Fitzmaurice might yet be alive; and that some strange and unlooked for circumstance, might bring to light the mystery now so involved in darkness.

After some moments of thought, Gerald resolved to renew his acquaintance with Mrs. Atherstone and her daughter. An unaccountable desire again to behold Aleen, took possession of his mind. Accordingly, next day—after a little more attention to his toilet than usual—Colonel Granville, having enquired where they resided, proceeded towards their residence.

Turin is as well known at the present day to our countrymen, as any provincial town in their own little island—to many, perhaps, a great deal better. It is certainly, in our mind, one of, if not the handsomest built cities in Italy. The houses are stately and handsome, and the streets regular—perhaps too much so. Be that as it may, its situation is beautiful; and the country surrounding it, picturesque and lovely.

The colonel pursued his way leisurely. Here and there he could see traces of the siege it had so lately undergone by the Duke de Vendome. At length, he

reached a very handsome mansion, whose windows looked forth over the valley of the Po. Though the middle of October, the weather was extremely mild and beautiful—in fact, more like the early part of September.

On sending up his name, which Colonel Granville was particular in doing, he was conducted through a very handsome suite of rooms into a spacious saloon. For a few minutes he remained alone, but was soon roused from his thoughts by the entrance of Mrs. Atherstone, who advanced, holding out her hand with a manner and smile exceedingly cordial and friendly, though the next moment her expressive countenance, as Gerald thought, looked troubled; and he remarked that she was pale, and thinner than when last they met.

"This is, indeed, a most unexpected pleasure, Colonel Granville," said Mrs. Atherstone, her dark eyes resting upon the much changed, but stately figure of the young Colonel.

Kissing the fair hand held out to him, Gerald led the lady to a seat, saying—

"To me, dear lady, this meeting is most fortunate. Several years have passed, and not one face have I seen during that time, familiar to me, or which could recal one pleasurable hour in my own dear land. I trust your fair daughter enjoys good health."

Mrs. Atherstone replied that Aleen was then entirely recovered from an internal injury she had received in a fall from a horse. It was on her account they came abroad, to spend the winter in Italy; she expected the return of Aleen every moment, who had gone out for a drive with Mrs. Dalton, a great friend of hers, whose husband was attached to the British embassy in Florence. "But allow me, Colonel Granville," added she, "to congratulate you on your brilliant military career. Both Aleen and myself felt sincere pleasure on hearing of your gallantry and rapid promotion! and also much grieved when we learned that you had been severely wounded at the famous battle of Blenheim."

"My dear madam," returned Gerald, gratified by the kind manner of Mrs. Atherstone, "you must not consider my promotion over many who equally deserved distinction, as gained by my own merit. I am what may fairly be termed a favourite with Fortune.—I joined, highly introduced to his Grace the Duke's notice; chance circumstances threw the ball at my foot; and a singularly fortunate assistance I was enabled to give Prince Eugene, at a critical moment, obtained me my present rank; whereas, had my brave Colonel not been shot down at the commencement of the battle, the chance would have been his."

"Fortune favours the brave, Colonel," said Mrs. Atherstone, smiling.

At that moment, the noise of carriage wheels, and a loud ringing at the great portal, caused the lady to pause. Gerald thought she turned somewhat paler. It might be fancy. She rose, however, saying—

"That is Mrs. Dalton and Aleen. I will just mention to Aleen your being here, that she may not be too suddenly surprised. Excuse me, one moment."

Why did Gerald Granville's heart beat quicker at the thought of seeing Aleen Atherstone? She was but a child—a mere artless girl—when last they met.

In a very few moments the sound of a light hasty step fell upon his ear in the adjoining apartment; and the next instant Aleen Atherstone, followed by her mother, entered the room. Gerald started from his chair to greet the dear girl, who, with all the warm feelings of her heart and country, and the memory of times past fresh upon her recollection, hurried forward to accost one she had never forgotten in her young heart.

But what a vision of surpassing loveliness met Gerald's gaze, as with flushed cheek and sparkling eyes she held forth—not one fair and fairy hand, but two, saying in a voice that was music to the ear—

"And is it possible, Colonel Granville, that we have met again, and so very, very unexpectedly."

The colour came in a rich glow over cheek and temple, as Gerald kissed—we are afraid rather warmly—the beautiful hands he held; and as the sweet girl's looks rested upon the dark brilliant eyes of the Colonel, there could be no mistaking the glance of intense admiration which Gerald cast upon the fair somnambulist. She, too, seemed struck with the great change that had taken place in the Colonel, whose always striking and graceful form was now fully matured. His handsome features and complexion—naturally dark—were embrowned by service and exposure to all weathers. His own hair, which he wore despite the fashion of the times, was left to its natural inclination, not twisted and tortured into the hideous mode of the British court. Altogether, Colonel Granville was of a noble and distinguished appearance; and Aleen, in her heart of hearts, thought so.

Before Gerald could respond to the sweet girl's welcome, a stifled sigh startled him and Aleen.

"Dearest mother!" exclaimed the maiden, turning rapidly round, "are you not well? You—" she hesitated; her own colour went and came, and then she added, as her mother took her hand and kissed her brow, "you over-exerted yourself last night, dearest mother. The rooms were very hot—you do not look well."

"You mistake, dear child," returned the mother, forcing—Gerald saw it *was* forced—a gay smile. "I sighed quite unknown to myself—some passing thought, perhaps. But here is our friend Mrs. Dalton."

Gerald was now introduced to that lady, and the party, seating themselves, the conversation became general.

"You were at the siege of this city, were you not, Colonel Granville?" asked Mrs. Dalton. "This very morning I heard the Marchese de Cerego mention your name. He was speaking in terms of high praise of an English officer in Prince Eugene's famous regiment, who had been of signal service to their king, Victor Amadeus. I requested the name of the English officer, and he gave me yours. How singular that I should, in a few hours

after, have the pleasure of meeting you, and finding that you are an old friend of Mrs. Atherstone."

"I remember the Marchese Cerego very well," returned Gerald; "he was an officer in the cavalry regiment which escorted the King in his escape from this city. His Majesty was graciously pleased to confer upon me the title of Count, and the cross of a distinguished order of knighthood. So you see, my dear madam, when once Dame Fortune adopts one as her favourite, there is no end of her smiles. Though, perhaps," and he spoke in a tone somewhat changed, for Aleen, who was attentively listening, turned her lustrous eyes upon his face, "perhaps Fortune's wheel may, for the future, be reversed."

"No, no, Colonel," said Mrs. Dalton, in a gay tone, and with a very meaning smile, as her eyes for an instant rested upon Aleen, "no—you will carry the smile of the fickle goddess with you to the end. You will find me a true prophetess. What say you, Aleen, my love?"

"Oh, Colonel Granville knows he has my good wishes," replied Aleen; "but these horrid wars are all over now," added she, turning to Gerald; "and you have won laurels enough. So do not try fortune any more with the sword, Colonel."

"Very good, indeed, Aleen," returned the sprightly Mrs. Dalton. "Do you challenge the Colonel to enter into the service of another goddess, even more fickle and dangerous?"

Aleen's cheeks vied with the rose; Mrs. Atherstone laughed, saying—

"You had a proof of Aleen's powers as a prophetess, Mary, at Domo D'Ossola, where we all were nearly drowned in the lake. She insisted, Colonel, that it was one of the finest days in the world, and promised us a delightful excursion over the Lago Maggiore; instead of which, we were drenched to the skin, and nearly upset by a furious squall."

"After all, mother," retorted Aleen, laughing, "a prophet is only a prophet in his own country."

"By-the-bye," said Mrs. Dalton, "your excursion on the lake puts me in mind, Aleen, of our party to-morrow, to the Superga. Of all others, you, Colonel, must be of the company ; so mind now, I expect you to join us. I will take no excuse ; for I am the proposer and inviter to this long-projected excursion."

"You need be under no apprehension, Mrs. Dalton, of refusals—where you are the inviter," said the Colonel ; "but I am curious to know why I, of all others, should visit this stately temple, the Superga."

"Because," replied Mrs. Dalton, "the king you so happily succoured at the critical moment has caused a most magnificent painting to be placed in the Superga, to fulfil a vow, made at the time, to commemorate that event, and the siege of his capital."

After some further conversation on divers subjects, Gerald took his leave, promising to be punctual the next morning.

"The weather looks so lovely, that we are sure to have a delightful day," said Aleen to the Colonel, in parting. "We shall have a talk over old times."

"Prophesying again, Aleen," interposed her mother. "Remember the Lago Maggiore."

Gerald left his friends, more than ever fascinated with Mrs. Atherstone's daughter ; and from that hour he vowed that if Aleen refused his love, no other should ever gain it.

CHAPTER XIX.

As our hero sat in his solitary saloon—for as yet he neither visited or received visits—his mind dwelt entirely upon his late interview with Mrs. Atherstone and her lovely

daughter. He was satisfied and dissatisfied with the reception he had met—not dissatisfied with respect to the real feelings of esteem the mother and daughter entertained for him; he did not doubt that the pleasure, sparkling in the eyes of Aleen, as she held out her hands to him, was genuine and heartfelt. There could not be any deception in her. No, Aleen was the same artless, open-hearted maiden; time, though it had rendered her superlatively lovely, had not changed her nature nor her feelings. It was in the manner of Mrs. Atherstone that Gerald saw a change. He did not, for a moment, wrong Aleen's mother by supposing his loss of rank and fourteen thousand a-year influenced her sentiments towards him; but he felt there was something unpleasant—a mystery—a cloud of some kind, hovering between Aleen and himself, that would yet throw a dark shadow over their path.

Gerald passed an uneasy night; he slept little, but he thought much. Aleen Atherstone was, henceforward, to be to him the touchstone of his future felicity.

After the departure of the Colonel, Mrs. Dalton turned to her friend, saying—

“I never saw a more distinguished-looking person than this new-found friend of yours. Do tell me where you first met, and what is the cause of this sadness of manner. It's no use, Matilda, your hiding a secret from me. I will never rest till I find it out.” And the gay Mrs. Dalton shook her head, and its clustering ringlets—for she, too, preferred the Italian mode to the custom of her own country.

“It's not fair to tax me with having a secret, Mary,” returned Mrs. Atherstone, smiling, “because I happened to feel a kind of oppression. I'm not joking, indeed; but all this morning I felt an unaccountable depression of spirits. But you were asking me where I first met Colonel Granville. Aleen, there, could better tell you the origin of the acquaintance.”

“I will do so, my dear madam,” said Aleen; “and I think you will say that the intimacy between the gallant

Colonel and myself commenced in rather a novel mode—namely, at a road-side inn, on our way from Oxford to London, in the middle of the night, and when I was scarcely fourteen years old. At this inn, I was walking in my sleep—a habit, thank goodness, I have abandoned since I arrived at years of discretion. I fear I shall shock you,” continued the beautiful girl, with a smile on her lip, and a slight flush on her cheek, “when I confess to you that I walked right into the Colonel’s chamber; he was then, of course, a very young man, and was, I suppose, fast asleep. However, I walked out again, and it seems he must have awoken and followed me. I next got out on a balcony, and popped right into the arms of no less a person than the terrible Dick Turpin, the highwayman, who, with two or three other robbers, intended, after plundering mamma’s trunks and boxes, to rob the house. You may well imagine that this rude *rencontre* broke my dream, and I awoke with a terrible scream, which roused the whole house; but not before Mr. Granville knocked the robber over the balcony, and caught me in his arms. One of the other robbers fired his pistol at Mr. Granville, and slightly wounded him; and then, getting alarmed, decamped. Now, dear lady, that was the way we commenced our acquaintance; was it not quite out of the common? You smile. Now do you not think I should make a capital story-teller?”

“No, not by any means, Aleen,” said Mrs. Dalton, laughing. “However, it was very fortunate you were such a child.”

“Very, indeed,” responded Aleen, seriously; “for otherwise I should be so very much older now. But you seem to doubt my abilities in story-telling, to which I am rather partial. I like hearing and telling a story; so now let me know why you pronounce me to be only an indifferent story-teller.”

“For the simplest of all reasons,” replied Mrs. Dalton; “you have jumbled together your sleep-walking propensities, road-side inns, robbers, and young men knocking

down and shooting people in the head. Now, to be properly understood, each part requires a separate grouping."

Aleen laughed merrily, for she saw her mother smile; and, besides, the fair girl was thinking of the excursion on the morrow, and of the gallant colonel who was to join it. Oh! thrice happy youth, that can enjoy the present without poisoning it with thoughts of the future!

An equerry from the Prince de Carignano, requesting a visit from Colonel Granville, detained our hero the morning of the party to the Superga. However, as O'Regan held his horse in readiness to mount the moment he left the palace, Gerald overtook the heavy carriages containing the party before they had proceeded a league from Turin. There were several gentlemen on horseback, and a few ladies also. Gerald Granville's noble figure and splendid English horses immediately attracted the attention of all, but especially of the fair ones of the party.

After shaking hands with the Marchese Cerego, and one or two other Piedmontese officers, with whom he was slightly acquainted, Gerald rode up alongside the immense lumbering berlin, that contained, not only the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone and Mrs. Dalton, but also the Marchesa Cerego and three young and very handsome girls. A shade passed over the countenance of the Colonel as his glance roamed over the fair contents of the berlin, and rested not on Aleen.

"Ah, you are a sad defaulter, Colonel Granville," said Mrs. Dalton, after a rapid introduction to the rest of the occupiers of the carriage; "your promises——"

"Fair lady," interrupted Gerald, "spare me till you first hear me. His Highness, Prince Carignano, sent for me this morning; but I despatched my servant with my excuses for being late."

"Ah, well, I acknowledge to having received your message," responded Mrs. Atherstone. "We have enlisted you to attend us, instead of being one of the boating party, as Aleen intended you should."

"Boating party!" exclaimed Gerald, turning his head, and looking with surprise at the swollen and muddy waters of the Po, along whose banks they were proceeding. "Surely, Mrs. Atherstone, you were not tempted to let Miss Atherstone proceed by the river, at this period of the year."

"You need not be alarmed, my dear madam," said the Marchese de Cerego, seeing Mrs. Atherstone turn towards the river with a very anxious look. "The Marchese de Gavoni is a skilful pilot for our river; and his boatmen are noted for their attention and care. The river is certainly rapid! but the barge they are in is a very beautiful vessel, and the row down the stream is magnificent."

"So Aleen was told," returned Mrs. Atherstone, "and she is so partial to water excursions that she persuaded me to let her join the Marchese's party."

Just then a turn in the road brought them close alongside the river; and Gerald, as he looked upon the discoloured waters, and their very rapid flow, thought, in his own mind, that Aleen had better have remained with her mother. The mother thought so, too; and looked keenly up the stream for the gay barge of the Marchese.

An English cavalier of the name of Lake now rode up, saying the barge was coming rapidly down. They had reached the halting place; and the carriages drew up at a kind of quay or small mole by the bank of the river, which, about that point, was divided by a long, narrow Island; and the stream ran violently between the Island and the bank. From the Island, extended several strong poles, which swayed to and fro with the violence of the current. Sometimes appearing above water, but more often hidden by the force of the stream.

Gerald Granville had dismounted, and given his horse to the groom; several of the other gentlemen did the same. They all approached the landing place to wait the arrival of the barge, which they could plainly see descending the river, with its gay streamers, and the gorgeous flag of its owner flaunting over the stern. It

had a gay party on board, and the six oarsmen wore a bright orange livery, which shone flamingly in the unchecked rays of a mid-day sun. On she came, the Colonel's eyes steadily fixed upon the group of ladies in the stern. There was no awning or canopy, for the sun, at that period of the year, was more agreeable than otherwise.

As the barge approached, she took a sweep towards the Island, intending, no doubt, to round up alongside the Mole, with her head to the stream; but this, with the powerful current, required skill and room. The Colonel, perceiving their object, said to the Marchese Cerego:

"It would be a better manœuvre to drop her alongside as she came down the stream."

As the Colonel spoke, the rowers at one side ceased their exertions, while the others pulled her round intending to sweep up to the side of the quay. At that moment, the barge drove on some sunken poles, and heeled violently on one side. Instant terror seized upon some of the females on board; the barge swayed fearfully over, and several persons were thrown, by the shock, into the stream.

Screams, both from those in the boat, and those in the carriages, on shore, filled the air. But the accident had scarcely occurred before the Colonel was in the water, divested of his riding-coat and boots. He saw three persons—one a female—borne down the stream, and rushing along the bank with the speed of thought.

Being a bold, and very powerful swimmer, he soon approached the female, who was kept up by her garments, aided by a singular presence of mind. When he threw himself into the water, Gerald knew not who the female was; enough for him that a human being was in peril of life. But as he stretched forth his hand to grasp the figure before him, the face of his beloved Aleen met his gaze. She was not insensible; her eyes, for an instant, rested on his, as she whirled round with the violent eddies,

and her hands were stretched forth. The next instant, his arm was round her waist, and her head rested on his shoulder—for the vigorous soldier, her weight was as nothing. Did Aleen think, in that moment of peril, for she was quite sensible? Yes, the sweet girl did think, and—. But why reveal the secret of a young, warm, and affectionate heart?

Striking across the stream, Gerald landed on a small island.

Aleen, as he raised her from the water, and pressed her to his heart, murmured some words which fell upon the ear of Gerald like the sweetest of music. As he bore her up the bank, he beheld, to his surprise, O'Regan land, dragging with him the insensible form of a man. Dennis shook himself, muttering aloud—

“By my soul and conscience, I am afraid I've saved the life of a dead man!”

And then he commenced shaking the unfortunate sufferer.

Gerald had hardly seated Aleen on the bank, and rested her head upon his breast, and put aside the beautiful tresses of rich hair that fell disordered over the person, when, for a second, the soft eyes of the maiden met his, and she said, in a low murmur—

“The faintness is going off now, Gerald. My poor mother! Let us be seen from the bank.”

“Here is the barge, sir,” shouted O'Regan, from a little distance. “By the powers, sir, I've shaken a little life—thanks be—into him. It's not lucky saving a dead man!” he muttered to himself, as he propped his patient up against the bank; when, seeing him open his eyes, he added—“Musha, thank God, ye're not dead yet! How are you?”

“*Crazie mille grazie, signor!*” replied the half-drowned Italian, putting his hand out to his deliverer.

O'Regan rubbed his head, saying—

“Not half as good a language as Irish—can't make out a word of it.”

At that moment, the barge touched the bank, and Mrs. Atherstone, assisted by the Marchese Cerego, landed. The next moment the daughter was in the arms of her mother—who spoke not, but clasped her child, all dripping as she was, to her heart. She held out her hand to Gerald Granville. No words were spoken; but the eyes of Mrs. Atherstone expressed all the mother's soul and heart.

Thus ended this long-projected party of pleasure—beginning in smiles, but too often, alas! like many others, ending in tears; for unfortunately, an English gentleman, of the name of Herbert, perished. His death threw a gloom, for a time, over the English residents in Turin.

Dry garments, for Aleen, were procured at a mansion near at hand; and then the party returned to Turin.

After seeing Mrs. Atherstone and Aleen to their home, Gerald returned to his own rooms in a very thoughtful mood. Having changed his soaked garments, he threw himself on a couch, to ponder over the event which had just occurred—an event which was henceforth to throw either sunshine or shadow over his path. A feeling of intense delight, notwithstanding the doubtful future, pervaded his mind; and then he reproached himself bitterly, for so selfish and cruel a thought. Why should he feel delighted at knowing that Aleen loved him? If there were insurmountable obstacles to their union, why should he rejoice?

Gerald learned in the evening that Aleen was still suffering from the effects of the accident on the river. A slight fever had supervened; and the mother watched anxiously at her daughter's bedside. The next day, however, the signs of fever had passed off; her medical attendant declaring that in two or three days she would be as well as ever.

This intelligence was no sooner communicated to him, than Gerald received a note from Mrs. Atherstone, requesting to see him at an early hour the next day. The colonel held the paper containing those few words, fixing

his eyes upon the writing ; but his thoughts were not wholly absorbed by the contents of the note. At length, he was startled from his reverie by accidentally raising his eyes to a large mirror opposite ; when, to his great surprise, he beheld reflected the figure of a man, in a monk's dress, standing behind him. Turning round, in some astonishment, he faced his strange and silent visitor. Before he had time to speak, the monk, with a slight inclination of his head, said—

“Pardon my intrusion, Colonel Granville Fitzmaurice,”—laying a strong emphasis on the word Fitzmaurice, and speaking English with the accent and tone of an Englishman—“Your servant wished to announce me, but I prevented him. Your door was open ; and so lost in thought were you, that my entrance was unnoticed.”

Gerald felt considerable surprise at hearing a perfect stranger address him by his father's name. Wondering what could be the motive of the stranger's intrusion, he said—

“May I beg to know to what I owe the favour of this visit ?” pointing, at the same time, to a chair.

The monk bowed, and sat down ; and, as he did so, threw back his cowl, revealing a very remarkable countenance. He was taller even than the colonel ; and though, perhaps, full eight-and-fifty years of age, still perfectly erect and majestic. This had struck the colonel before he sat down ; and now his features attracted as much attention as his remarkable figure. In early life, the stranger must have been singularly handsome ; though, when his gaze rested upon the colonel's face, there was an expression of sadness—if not sternness—in his visage.

“I have taken this liberty,” began the monk, “of calling upon you, colonel, from a desire of either promoting your future felicity, or preventing you from plunging others, as well as yourself, into much unhappiness—if not misery.”

While the monk spoke, the colour went and came into the cheek of Gerald Granville.

"You speak in riddles, monk," said the colonel; "I may partly guess what you allude to; but, for my soul, I cannot imagine what you, of all others, know either of my feelings or my future intentions."

"More," calmly returned the monk, "than you are aware of. I have no wish, colonel, to deal in mysteries. I would even now speak openly and plainly; but am restrained by circumstances. However, I will explain, in part, my meaning. Yesterday, you saved the life of Aleen Atherstone—you were of service to her before, when a mere girl. Now, it is quite impossible to have served Aleen Atherstone twice in the manner you have, and not feel for her more than friendship. The plain fact is, you love her as your own soul." And the dark, piercing eyes of the monk seemed to read Gerald's dearest thoughts. "You are silent, Colonel Fitzmaurice."

"I am so, monk," returned Gerald; and he spoke somewhat excitedly. "I allow no man, even covered with the garment you wear, either to scan my thoughts, or control my inclinations. By what right do you intrude your presence and your observations on me?"

"Because," still calmly spoke the friar, "I am Aleen's father."

Gerald Granville felt as if struck down by some heavy blow. The blood forsook his cheek, while his eyes were rivetted upon those of the monk, with a look of intense anxiety.

"Aleen's father!" ejaculated he; "merciful Heaven, how is this?"

A loud laughing, heard on the stairs, startled the monk. Dropping the cowl over his face, he said, in a low voice—

"Remember my words, Gerald Fitzmaurice. We shall meet again."

And the monk passed through the door, as the Marchese de Cerego and the Count del Sparto, the equerry of Prince Carignano, entered the saloon.

"*Corpo di Bacco!*" exclaimed the Count del Sparto,

as he turned and looked after the monk, "what a majestic figure! Who the deuce is he, colonel? Not a petitioner for alms surely?"

"And certainly not your father-confessor, colonel," added the Marchese de Cerego, laughing, "as you do not profess the same faith."

"I really never saw the monk before," replied Gerald, shaking off the feeling that was crushing him, and endeavouring to speak cheerfully. "He is a marvellously tall, well-built man; but you frightened him away. He said he would call on me again."

"He never can be a messenger of Cupid," observed the count; "though, by the mass, the cowl is often used to disguise worse purposes. Perhaps, he was no monk after all. However, colonel, the prince wishes you to attend to-night at the palace."

"His highness heard of our calamitous excursion," observed the Marchese de Cerego, "and has expressed great regret at the fate of the unfortunate Mr. Herbert. He sent, also, his compliments, and his own physician to Madame Atherstone, and congratulated her on the safety of her daughter. If you remain long here, Colonel, we shall be eclipsed in the eyes of our fair dames."

"I shall be happy to attend to his highness's wishes," said Gerald, his thoughts being anywhere but with his guests, who shortly after departed, leaving him chagrined, mystified and miserable.

CHAPTER XX.

GERALD GRANVILLE's reflections were not pleasing, as he took his way the following morning to the mansion of the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone, bewildered by the dis-

covery of Aleen's father and Mrs. Atherstone's husband in the garments of a monk, and distracted by thinking of the insurmountable difficulties that appeared to be rapidly increasing to prevent a union between Aleen and himself. He was accordingly ushered into the saloon in a complete state of abstraction, from which he was roused by the soft kind tones of Mrs. Atherstone's voice, as she entered the room, and held forth her hand with a sad, but sweet smile, saying—

"To the preserver of her who is dearer to me than life, I need not apologise for my apparently cold leave-taking the other day. Though my manner may have appeared strange to you, Colonel Granville, I trust, short as has been our acquaintance, you will do my heart justice, and give it credit for deep and everlasting gratitude for my child's life."

"Dear madam, you truly have surmised my thoughts and feelings," replied Gerald, as he seated himself beside the somewhat agitated lady. "But how is Aleen? I need not, dear lady, tell you what my feelings and thoughts are with respect to her."

A sad sigh followed the question of our hero, as Mrs. Atherstone replied—

"She is quite recovered, as far as health is concerned, Colonel; and will, if you oblige us with your company, see you this evening. But I requested the favour of a visit from you to-day, for a particular reason—I must occupy your attention, Colonel," she added, with a faint smile; "may I ask for one or two hours?"

"Dear madam, be it as you wish. Time, to me, is nothing. I only dread—Alas! I know not what! But it is better to know the worst, than torture the mind with images that may not exist."

There was a momentary pause. At length, Mr. Atherstone broke the silence by saying—

"Yesterday, Colonel Granville, you were visited by Aleen's father."

She paused—while Gerald replied—

"Yes, madam ; and, I suppose, your husband."

"No, Colonel Granville," replied Mrs. Atherston "Not so. Aleen's father, and my only brother, Prince Ulick O'Connor."

"Good Heavens !" exclaimed our hero, with a start of profound astonishment, and an expression of deep regret on his handsome features. "Aleen not your child ! Alas," he added, with a suppressed sigh, "I see now, in a manner, the mystery of the past. And has Aleen known this from her childhood ?"

"No, Colonel. To me, from her earliest age, she has been as the fondest of children ; and, if possible, I have felt for her more than a mother's love. Till yesterday she knew not that she was O'Connor's daughter. And would to God that Aleen *was* my child ! The proudest wish of my heart would be gratified in her union with you."

Gerald kissed the hand that pressed his with all mother's affection ; and then, after a moment's thought, Mrs. Atherstone, in a clear, sweet voice, gave, to his deeply interested auditor, the following history of the principal scenes in her life.

"My father, Ulick Fergus O'Connor, before the destruction of the Irish princes, was acknowledged Sovereign Prince of Kerry, and owned a vast tract of country, and many splendid domains, all of which he lost by invasion and usurpation, except his estates in the vicinity of Bantry, including his beautiful castles and lakes at Glengarriff and Bear Island in the Bay of Bantry. Alas ! my dear Colonel, not only was the Prince deprived of his realm, but a great part of his confiscated property was bestowed upon Sir Vrance Granville, a favourite officer of Cromwell, who already possessed considerable estates in Ireland won by his ancestor in the wars of Elizabeth. Your ancestor, also, Gormon O'More Fitzmaurice, fought bravely against the usurper, Cromwell, but finally yielded on his terms. Your father, of the same faith as his sire before him, lost his life supporting the claims of the

miserably weak monarch, James; and the Fitzmaurice estates also became confiscated. Thus, to a certain extent, our families are equal sufferers from adherence to a hopeless cause.

“O'Connor of the West, as he was styled, after dropping the title of Prince, retired, when the hollow peace was established, to his Castle of the Lakes, though, by order of Cromwell, its fortifications and defences had been demolished. He had just married the daughter of the O'Kelly—a very lovely and amiable woman. The first year of his marriage, my brother Ulick was born; and not for ten years after did I see the light; but, alas, before I reached my fourth year, I lost that which is never to be recovered, a fond and doting mother.

“I must not dwell on my early life, but pass on to my beloved father's death, which took place as Ulick attained his twenty-second year. You have seen him now, Colonel, in his fifty-fourth year, for he is no more, and can partly judge what his appearance was in youth. In fact, in person and features, Ulick O'Connor was faultless. But, from his earliest years, he was of a fierce and ungovernable temper, always serious and thoughtful when not roused into passion, and for ever brooding over the injuries inflicted on his country, and the wrongs suffered by our race. The father confessor of the family, a distant kinsman of the O'Kelly's, was, unfortunately, a stern, gloomy, and bigoted man. At this period, I was myself a Catholic; and the first shock my faith received, was from this intolerable priest.

“Immediately after my beloved father's death, Ulick at once had the Castle of the Lakes put into a perfect state of defence, notwithstanding the rigour of the laws against such an act; but the country was then much disturbed. I know not how it was, but from my earliest childhood, I endeavoured to gain the love of my brother Ulick. Whether in his heart he returned my affection, I cannot say to this hour; but he certainly never showed me any. After my father's death, I was con-

fided to the care of a good and most amiable lady—a very distant relative, who was driven by misfortune to seek the asylum my brother offered her. This lady was in secret a Protestant. To gain a home and a protector, she kept her faith within her own heart, and outwardly professed to follow the religion of those with whom she lived. She is long since dead. Peace to her ashes! Concealment of her faith was her only error; for a most affectionate, fond protectress she was to me for eleven years. To her I no doubt owe my first thoughts upon the difference of creed, and these thoughts prompted a desire for further investigation.

“At this time, Ulick O’Connor was always styled prince by his numerous followers and dependents—for he inherited a very large fortune from his father, besides jewels and trinkets, of immense value. Then my mother was an only child, and an heiress to great wealth. I was about seventeen years of age, when I went on a visit to the O’Kellys of B——. There I first became acquainted with the Honourable William Terence Atherstone, a gentleman of English extraction; but one branch of his noble family had settled in Ireland from the time of Elizabeth. His brother, Lord Atherstone, possessed large estates, and resided entirely in England. He was married, but had no family. The Honourable William Atherstone was, at this period, in his twenty-fourth year—handsome, highly accomplished, and wealthy; for he inherited his Irish estates from his mother.

“Not to weary you, Colonel, we became attached, with but little hopes of my brother’s consent to our union; for Mr. Atherstone, like all his family, was a Protestant. Nevertheless, in an interview with my brother, he stated his attachment and his proposals; and, to my infinite joy and surprise, Ulick gave his consent. At the expiration of the year, we were married, and I went to reside with my husband at his beautiful estate and mansion, Atherstone Hall, in the county of Kerry, near the town of Kenmare. Four years passed

in uninterrupted happiness : the fifth, after an' illness that nearly cost me my life, I gave birth to a little girl."

Mrs. Atherstone sighed heavily at this point of her narration.

"The poor babe," resumed she, "lived but a few hours. Most unfortunately my husband was in England; and though he hastened his return the moment he heard of my illness, yet violent gales and contrary winds detained him, so that when he succeeded in crossing the Channel, and in reaching home, his child was no more, and I so dangerously ill as to be unconscious of his presence, and of all that had occurred. My brother Ulick remained in the house till I was pronounced out of danger, and then left Atherstone Hall. I slowly recovered.

"Alas! a few short months, and I was destined to receive a greater and deeper wound than the loss of my infant. My beloved husband was killed by a fall from his horse. How I bore such terrible misfortunes it is needless to say. The recalling them even now causes much anguish; but I feel it necessary, though in a brief manner, to state every event as it occurred. During the passage of these few years, great and signal changes came over the land of my birth. The hopes of the Catholic party revived with the accession of James to the throne of Great Britain. Factions, headed by men of rank and influence, were rapidly rising all over the country. In truth fatal times were coming. Life and property were no longer safe; and bands of miscreants roamed unchecked through the country, committing frightful acts. Fearful of remaining in the lonely situation of Atherstone Hall, though near the town of Kenmare, I took up my residence in the Castle of the Lakes, at my brother's request, though I felt a wish to proceed to England.

"I had not been there a week, before I bitterly repented accepting Ulick's invitation. I found my brother more gloomy and bigoted than ever. His

expressions against the English settlers in Ireland were fierce and revengeful; and he vowed, in his moments of passion, that he would never rest till they were annihilated, or driven from their unjustly-held possessions. The Castle of the Lakes was now a very strongly fortified place, and contained a large number of armed retainers.

“Though I kept almost entirely to my own apartments, with my old nurse and two female attendants, who were strongly attached to me, yet I sometimes came across the resident and visitors to the castle. One person I particularly remarked: he was a tall, strong man, with very handsome features, though their expression was, at times, extremely disagreeable, if not startling. His dark and piercing eyes made me shudder, I could scarcely say why, for I came but seldom in his way. I understood he was called Fenwick, but this, no doubt, was an assumed name. I remained quite ignorant of the events, the terrible events, that had taken place after the landing of King James; and my brother’s mad schemes he also kept concealed from me.

“At length, to my astonishment, I became acquainted with events that had occurred before my marriage. It seems that your father and Ulick O’Connor had often met, previously to your father’s marriage. They both espoused the same cause, and both were high-spirited and remarkably handsome men. Mr. Gerald Fitzmaurice was the only chief, amongst those that joined O’Connor, who positively refused to have anything to do with the plot, having for its object the extermination of the English settlers in Ireland. This refusal led to a little coldness between them; but, strange freak of destiny, Ulick O’Connor beheld your beautiful and accomplished mother, while on a visit at Donerail Castle. Peculiarly alive, notwithstanding his gloomy disposition, to female loveliness, he became passionately enamoured of Emmeline Granville, notwithstanding the difference of creed, and her being the offspring of the

nated Saxon blood. But the daughter of Vrance Granville did not return Ulick's passion ; for she was already attached to your noble father, Gerald Fitzmaurice, and in six months from that time became his bride.

"Your father must have been united to Emmeline Granville just about the period I gave my hand to the Honourable Mr. Atherstone. My old nurse, the person who informed me of these events, said that Ulick's rage and passion, when he heard of your mother's marriage, was terrible. The wound rankled to his heart's core, and she declares he vowed a deadly and lasting hatred to all the race of Fitzmaurice."

Mrs. Atherstone paused ; for she saw, by the changing expression of Colonel Granville's features, how much he was pained by this part of her narrative. She readily imagined what was passing in his mind. She had inquired minutely into the history of Gerald's family some time after their first acquaintance commenced ; and seeing him alternately pale and red with emotion, she immediately surmised the cause, and at once hastened to undeceive him.

"I percieve, my dear friend," she continued, "the impression my words make on your mind in reference to the past. But of this be assured—and I pledge you my sacred word—Ulick O'Connor, with all his faults and errors, and his fiery passions, was incapable of an outrage so horrible and bloodthirsty, as that which bereaved you at the same moment of a mother, a grandfather, and a brother."

"Thank God for that!" ejaculated Gerald fervently.

"You will see," continued Mrs. Atherstone, "before I close my narrative, why I so confidently make this assertion. The perpetrator of that crime and outrage was most likely the man I mentioned to you of the name of Fenwick. Mark, I am not positive. My surmise is wholly based upon the hearing of events that you yourself will now be able to judge of likewise. It was only

'last night that I received permission to speak of these things to you. I will now continue."

Perfectly perplexed, and feverish with excitement, Gerald listened breathlessly.

"Things were beginning," resumed Mrs. Atherstone, "to wear a very sinister aspect in the Castle of Glengariff, or, as it was usually styled, the Castle of the Lakes. You are not, perhaps, aware of the wildly romantic situation of O'Connor's Castle. Seated on a thickly wooded eminence, some hundred feet above the placid Lakes of Glengariff, the Castle commanded—for, alas, it exists no longer—the most varied and beautiful prospect, extending over the fine bay of Bantry, and Bear Island, where my brother in his youth had a hunting tower. The hill on which the Castle stood was washed at the base by the waters of the bay, and its sides, to within a few hundred yards of the summit, were richly covered with wood. Beneath, were the Lakes, with their hundred isles clothed to the very water's edge, with evergreens and dwarf oak. Such was the Castle of the Lakes in point of situation. The building itself was a magnificent one for extent and strength.

"I determined, if possible, to remove from the Castle. Bands of fierce and desperate characters filled the halls of my ancestors with riot and unbridled license. Scarcely a mile distant from Glengariff was a very retired, but comfortable cottage, into which I removed with my old nurse, then relapsing into second childhood, two female attendants, and the old gardener. There I determined to remain till I should have an opportunity of requesting my brother to conduct me to Waterford, whence I might embark for England. But Ulick remained absent; and, finally, the adherents of James, after that monarch had fled, were hunted through the Island like wild beasts. I soon learned that, on account of some daring deeds committed by a band led by Ulick and Fenwick, O'Connor was proclaimed an outlaw, and that a price was offered for his capture. A strong force was sent against him:

he was forced, after a fierce conflict, to fly; and then a detachment, under a skilful officer, was sent to dismantle, and take possession of, the Castle of the Lakes. This force, Fenwick contrived to entrap, amid the defiles of the mountains leading to Glengariff. Not a man escaped. This so exasperated the Government, that they resolved to burn the residence of the O'Connors to the ground and disperse, or exterminate his dependants.

"I tell you these things, Colonel, in as brief a manner as possible, and hurry to that part most interesting, though distressing, to you.

"I said the Government were determined to destroy Glengariff Castle; and as the approaches through the mountains were difficult and dangerous, the troops proceeded from Bantry in boats, and landed at the foot of Glengariff. I well remember that dreadful night. An awful storm of thunder, with tremendous rain, and furious gusts of wind, came on after sunset. At the cottage, which stood upon level ground, near the only road leading from the glen into the country, we knew not of the landing of the troops, nor of their intention of surprising Glengariff; but we had not retired to rest; for we were all terrified by the terrific peals of thunder, and the howling of the blast, as it raged round the frail cottage. My nurse and two attendants were sitting pale as death, close to each other; while, as I sat listening, I fancied I heard strange sounds besides those of the storm. At length, in a pause of the hurricane, we heard the peal of musketry. Suddenly, with a cry that startled us all, my old nurse stood for a moment erect—one hand stretched out towards the sea, the other supporting her withered and worn-out frame. Her snow-white locks hung wildly over her shrunken cheeks, and her poor glassy eyes were fixed upon some imaginary object.

"'Woe, woe, woe!' half screamed the old dame, in her native tongue. 'Woe to the princely race of O'Connor!—the Ban of the Sassanach—the curse of the oppressor—has fallen! The home of the hero lies low!'

"And clasping her hands together, she fell back into her chair insensible. The two women screamed and hid their faces in their hands. I am not superstitious; but I felt a chill creep over me. I was rising to assist my old nurse, when the rapid fall of a horse's hoof on the road without, caused me to pause. The instant after, it stopped at the door. A foot approached, and a powerful hand dashed in the frail door. I did not shriek, but I trembled in every limb. The little hall was crossed, the door pushed open, and the towering form of Ulick O'Connor entered the room. His plumed hat was beaten and torn in shreds by the storm: his mantle was drenched: his face and features were flushed and distorted with passion.

"'Ulick, my God, Ulick! what has happened?' I exclaimed, as I rushed forward, and caught his arm.

"With a single stride, he reached the window, tore off the shutters, and, with a wild laugh, said—

"'There! behold the last home of the O'Connor of the West! Even on such a night as this, the cursed Sassanach has made it too hot to hold the last of its possessors,'

"I looked out stupified. The Castle of the Lakes was in a sheet of flame.

"The wild cry of a child caused me to start round even in that moment of terrible excitement; and then I saw Ulick throwing off his cloak, and, beneath, I beheld a little girl, drenched, half-suffocated, and terror-stricken. Motioning with his hand for my two paralyzed attendants to leave the room, Ulick, after casting a look upon the aged nurse, said, staying me by the arm as I was hastening to assist her—

"'You may spare yourself, Matilda: the dead require no care, but to place them in their last resting-place. Listen to the living and outcast O'Connor for the last time. We may never meet again!'

"I was awe-struck. My old nurse was, indeed, dead; and the child which Ulick drew from beneath the folds of his mantle, nearly so.

“ ‘Listen to me, Matilda,’ said my brother ; ‘take this child, and rear it as you would your own. This girl is—’ he hesitated a moment, pressed his hand to his brow, and then said, in a low, agitated voice—‘This child, named Aleen, and born in wedlock, is mine.’

“ ‘Yours, Ulick!’

“And I took the little trembling thing in my arms, with its pale, but lovely, face turned up towards me. I pressed it to my bosom, as if it was its natural resting-place. It was between three and four years old, just the age mine would have been had it lived. I kissed its cold cheek and lips, and, even in its terror, it smiled upon me. That moment, in my heart of hearts, I vowed I would be a fond and true mother to it.

“ ‘There, that will do,’ said O’Connor bitterly. ‘You will have time enough for fondness. Hear what I have to say, for my time is brief.’—He unslung from his neck a heavy casket, held by a strong clasp of leather. ‘In that,’ said Ulick, ‘are the O’Connor jewels, worth above thirty thousand pounds. Should circumstances require it, sell them ; they will be a sufficient fortune for that child, if she never have another. But though I know you deserted the faith of your forefathers, you must take an oath upon this emblem of our redemption. An oath is an oath which catholic and heretic will equally respect.’—So saying, he took a jewelled crucifix from his neck, handed it to me, exclaiming, ‘Swear to rear that child in the religion of its ancestors—the only true faith. Swear never to attempt to sow the cursed seeds of your own heretical creed in its mind ; and—more than all—swear’—and he spoke passionately—‘swear, if she lives, that she shall never wed a Fitzmaurice.’ ”

Gerald Granville hid his face in his hands for a moment, and then looking up with a countenance pale and anxious, said in a very low voice—

“Dear madam, did you take that oath ?”

“No, Colonel—the oath I did not take ; for as O’Connor ceased speaking, a man’s face was thrust into the room,

and a harsh deep voice said, 'The O'Connor is lost! The cursed horse of the Sassanach are coming up the valley. One moment lost, is death.'—O'Connor seized his mantle.—'Swear!' vociferated he. 'Be quick.' Several musket-shots were then heard. 'To horse!' shouted the man from without.—'I swear, Ulick,' said I, 'to be a mother to it—never to bias it in its——' 'Are you mad, Prince?' shouted the man, rushing into the room, and seizing O'Connor by the arm; 'they are entering the bridle-road. To horse, or we are lost!' Ulick was dragged from the room, and I heard, the moment after, the hoofs of his horse striking the flinty-road as he spurred furiously up the steep pass that led from the cottage into the mountains.

"Minute details of what followed the flight of O'Connor from Ireland are unnecessary. After a time, I arranged my affairs, and proceeded to England, where, with my husband's family, I easily passed off Aleen as my own daughter; for during the troubled state of Ireland, little or no intercourse took place between me and my relatives. I settled, after a time, in a delightful villa, which I purchased near Lord Atherstone's, and there, in the culture and education of my beloved charge, years passed over cheerfully and happily.

"Often and often, have I pondered over that eventful night when Aleen was consigned by my brother to my care. In vain I have tormented my brain in conjectures, as to who was the mother of Aleen; but not the most distant clue could I gain—I could fix upon no female, in any station or rank I knew, likely to have become the wife of O'Connor.

"Though I did not take any oath to my brother to fulfil his wishes, I still considered it was my duty to act according to his expressed desire. Aleen was accordingly reared in the catholic faith. But it seemed that Providence early implanted in her mind a desire to be acquainted with the Scriptures. 'Why, mother,' she would say to me, even at the early age of twelve years, 'why, beloved mother, should I worship God in a different place

than you? Why should a priest, as you call Mr. Mc.Mahon, tell me to do things quite different from what I see you do? I wish to pray to God as you do, and read the Bible. But Father Mc.Mahon says I must not, only as he directs me.'

"But were I to detain you with all the arguments used by Aleen, even when a child, I should become tedious. Suffice it to say, vain were my intentions. At sixteen years of age, Aleen firmly declared it was quite useless for Mr. Mc.Mahon to urge and torment her further. She *would* read the Scriptures; adding that, in heart, she was a protestant. I could do no more.

"Not one word of Ulick's fate could I learn. The entire O'Connor estates were confiscated; but I had already determined that Aleen should inherit all my fortune. Besides which she possessed a noble fortune in the jewels left by O'Connor; for I considered it better to dispose of my part of the magnificent gems consigned to me, which brought nearly twenty thousand pounds. This sum, when Aleen was eight years old, was placed out at interest; so that, when she is of age, that alone will be an ample fortune.

"Singularity enough, from want of thought, when we first encountered you, on our journey up to London, I did not imagine that you were in any way connected with the Irish family of Fitzmaurice; but when you mentioned it yourself, one evening in Mrs. Mc.Mahon's house in London, the name caused me to turn sick at heart; for it recalled the past, almost forgotten, to my mind. The terror of losing Aleen—of having her torn from me, should our intimacy continue, and reach Ulick's knowledge—for, I knew not how it was, but I had latterly found he was still alive and kept an eye upon our movements—so afflicted me, that I resolved, on the instant, strange as it might appear to you, to quit London and return to the country.

"I did so, as you are aware. Three years were passed. It was then Aleen declared her determination of becoming

a Protestant ; and then it was I became aware that Ulick O'Connor lived, and was either near at hand himself, or had certain intelligence of our proceedings conveyed to him. About this time, I received a letter, left by an unknown messenger. On opening it, to my extreme surprise, I found it was from Ulick O'Connor. Not one word of the past was mentioned in this epistle ; nor did he refer to his own life from the period of our separation. He bitterly bewailed the change in Aleen's religion, and blamed me for not taking more stringent measures to retain her in her forefathers' creed. He also bade me beware of again renewing an acquaintance with a Fitzmaurice, or he would claim his child, and remove her from my care. After many other remarks tending nearly to the same point, he ended by saying, he wished, as Aleen's health seemed to require it, that I should go abroad and pass a winter or two in Italy ; and that if—according to his request—I would make Turin my residence for a time, he would contrive to visit that city, and most probably make himself known to his child. This was the purport of his letter ; but till peace was established, I was unable to visit the Continent.

“A very intimate friend of mine, Mrs. Dalton, expressing a wish to accompany us, we commenced our journey, and reached here without any inconvenience. In again meeting with you, Colonel, I once more see the hand of Providence. You saved the life of my beloved girl. I was now resolved to struggle no longer against what appeared to me to be the decrees of Fate. It seemed that Aleen and you were destined for each other. She did not attempt to conceal her attachment ; neither do I see why I should be so insincere as to pretend ignorance of the fact. Aleen, from your first meeting, though then scarcely fourteen, never forgot the service you rendered her. In again preserving her life, you firmly riveted an affection that no circumstances, I feel satisfied, will extinguish, or even weaken. Yesterday, after I had brought my mind to this way of thinking, I received a note containing simply

these words: "I will see you, Matilda, this evening at six o'clock. I request you will be alone.—ULICK." Need I tell you how my heart beat at the prospect of this meeting? We met—warmly on my part—coldly, alas! on his.

"Ulick was changed, indeed; but he had the same towering grandeur of height: his hair was still untouched by time; but the lines in his face were strongly marked. The features, too, were much altered. Still, there was no mistaking the princely O'Connor, even in a monk's dress. When first I saw that dress, I started, and he probably saw by my looks that I wondered whether he had really become a monk; for he said—'I merely wear this dress to avoid recognition—I rank as a general officer in the French service, and was here with the Duke de Vendôme; but as I know many persons in this city, and do not wish to be discovered, I have adopted this disguise.' Before I could ask any question, he cut me short by these words: 'Listen to me, Matilda; for what I have now to say will have a decided influence upon your future happiness and that of my child. You have—perhaps you could not avoid it—renewed your acquaintance with Colonel Fitzmaurice. He has saved the life of my child. So far I am his debtor. I visited him this morning for the express purpose of stating to *him* what I will now state to *you*. But I was interrupted. Time and the knowledge that I was deceived by a detested villain, has removed much of my animosity against the name and race of the Fitzmaurices. You will do me justice in supposing I am deeply grateful for the preservation of my child's life. I am aware of Colonel Fitzmaurice's attachment to Aleen; and I can very well imagine that that feeling may be, or is, returned. But their union can never take place with my consent, except on certain conditions.'

"'Name them, Ulick,' I breathlessly exclaimed.

"'Hear me out,' interrupted my brother, impatiently, and in a tone I did not like.

"Good Heavens, madam!" anxiously and eagerly demanded Gerald, "name those conditions, I beseech you. The expression of your features alarms me."

"Alas! my dear friend, they might as well be buried in oblivion, for I am as satisfied, as I sit here, that neither you nor Aleen would, for one moment, listen to them; and I at once said so to Ulick—O'Connor requires that both you and Aleen renounce what he calls your heretical creed, and return to the faith of your forefathers. And again, that you, Gerald Fitzmaurice, abjure your allegiance to the Queen of England, and devote all your future energies to restore to the British throne its rightful sovereign—that the rank of a general officer in the French service—"

"Madam, madam!" exclaimed Gerald, in a voice of indignation, and starting from his chair, "your brother is mad—worse than mad, to—"

He paused, for the door suddenly opened, and Ulick O'Connor stood before them. He still wore his monkish attire; but the cowl was thrown back, disclosing the noble head and fine features of the O'Connor. A strange smile passed over his features, as he said—

"Excuse my hearing your words, Colonel Fitzmaurice: they were loud enough to reach further than *my* ears. You say I am mad; perhaps so. Had you the wrongs to bear that I have—hunted, outlawed, proscribed, robbed of my fair inheritance, deprived of the rank my ancestors bore for centuries, my very religion made a mockery and a pretence to plunder and trample upon an ill-starred race, whose only crime was fighting for their lawful king, hunted from his own kingdom by an unnatural daughter and rebellious subjects—I ask you," he continued, fixing his gaze upon the calm features of our hero—"I ask you, if you can wonder should such a victim become mad? Are you an Irishman? Are you aware that your own father shed his heart's blood in defence of his lawful king? that the power you serve outlawed your noble father—confiscated his property, and robbed his children

of their inheritance? Yet you think the O'Connor mad because he has asked you to win the woman you profess to love, by becoming what your father was before you."

"I have not interrupted you, O'Connor," said Gerald Granville, with perfect calmness, "till you should finish whatever it pleased you to say. As Aleen's father, nothing you could utter should provoke my anger. I respect your feelings, and shall not attempt to argue against your prejudices; but your assertions have no solid foundation. A weak, imbecile monarch throws away his crown, and, like a child tired of a toy, wishes to seize it again. With his child's ingratitude, I have nothing to do. But I *will* say it was base and cowardly, when driven from his own country, by his indignant subjects, to come to our unhappy land, and without one feeling of pity for the sufferings of Irishmen, or what they might endure in supporting his unjust cause, he used them as tools to regain a crown, to which he no longer possessed a shadow of right; and then, in the hour of need, left them to pay the penalty, from which he took care to fly. That my father and you should join the standard of James, may appear reasonable and right; for neither my father or you denied his claim to the crown he abandoned. The voice of the English nation called William of Orange to the throne. I was then a child, reared by my mother's brother, and I was educated in the same faith as my unfortunate mother and uncle professed. The succession to the throne of Great Britain was firmly and securely established, when I entered the service of her Majesty, and willingly, and with all my heart, took the oath of allegiance. I therefore am justified in thinking any man insane who would propose to me to forsake my religion—perjure myself by accepting service under a power ever hostile to England, and swear to embark in the service of a man whose father cruelly abused the generosity and faithfulness of my unfortunate countrymen. To win Aleen—God, that sees and reads my heart, knows I would sacrifice anything a man could sacrifice

with honour. Would Aleen herself accept a hand, sullied and disgraced by—”

“Never, dear Gerald, never!” exclaimed a voice, soft, sweet, but firm. And the same instant, O’Connor’s daughter advanced into the saloon, and at once held out her hand to her delighted lover, with a look of such perfect confidence and affection, as filled the heart of Gerald Granville with rapture, as he pressed the hand he held, with reverence and devotion, to his lips.

Ulick O’Connor stood gazing upon the beautiful and graceful form of his daughter, while his striking features were agitated, under the influence of contending feelings.

“Dearest girl, how is this?” interrogated Mrs. Atherton, starting to her feet. “Why, dearest, have you left your room?”

“Because, beloved mother, for such I shall always feel you have been to me,” replied Aleen, tenderly embracing her aunt—“because I heard in tones of excitement, the voice of him who saved my life at the risk of his own. I heard other voices, also, as I sat in my chamber, which you know is next to this; and words fell upon my ear that pained me to the heart. I could not bear to hear him, to whom I owe so much, spoken to so harshly, and endure it so calmly for my sake.”

Colonel Granville gazed upon the sweet speaker with strong emotion, and many a bitter thought rushed through his brain; while Ulick O’Connor remained motionless, with his eyes fixed upon them both. But not a word escaped his lips.

“How can I find words, dearest girl,” said the colonel, “to thank you for those kind feelings you have expressed? Henceforth, if life cannot be devoted to you, no other tie shall weaken the feeling of love and reverence I feel in my heart for you. Stern necessity may separate us, but no human power can sever two hearts united in a pure love, and a feeling of self-respect.”

A tear stole down the cheek of Aleen, as her lover kissed the hand he held, and then resigned it.

Turning to her father, Gerald said, calmly—

“I shall not attempt, Ulick O’Connor, to combat your opinions, or expect to change your feelings or intentions with respect to me. To gain Aleen’s hand, there is no sacrifice, as I have already said, compatible with honour, which I would not make. But let that subject rest. Still, before I resign my only hope of happiness in this life, I will hazard a question, that this moment strikes me as important. I have borne, without resentment, all you have said. Therefore, excuse the question I now put to you. What proof, Ulick O’Connor, have you ever given, to this dear lady, that Aleen is your child?”

The start the prince gave, as this question reached his ear, surprised them all. Aleen’s face became deadly pale; with parted lips, she stood gazing at the fearful change that came over the features of her father; while Mrs. Atherstone, astounded and bewildered by the question, and by the visible emotion it caused O’Connor, scarcely breathed.

“Colonel Fitzmaurice,” burst from the quivering lips of O’Connor, in a tone as if the words choked him, “you count upon the service you rendered me in saving my child’s life. You use this as a shield, behind which you may, with impunity, insult her father. Who, I say, ever dared to doubt the word of Ulick O’Connor? I say she is my child. Who dares to say she is not?”

“I have not said she is not,” replied Gerald Granville, with perfect calmness of tone and manner. “The happiness of my whole life is at stake. Who is there that would not grasp at the shadow of a hope? Then turning, with a faint smile to Mrs. Atherstone, who he saw was suffering much, he added—

“None without hope e’er loved the brightest fair,
For love will hope when reason would despair.”

“Sir,” exclaimed O’Connor, “you had a deeper meaning in the question you asked, than a mere random observation. You count yourself a man of refined

honour, to judge by some of your late expressions. I request a direct answer."

"You shall have it, O'Connor," returned the Colonel; "but not here. My reasons for what I said, you shall have. Name any hour to-morrow, and I will make it a point to be alone."

"Be it so," replied O'Connor, naming an early hour.

Gerald Granville then, in a few, but kind words, bade Mrs. Atherstone, who looked miserable, farewell. Taking the passive hand of Aleen's in his own, while O'Connor walked gloomily to a window, and stood with folded arms gazing upon vacancy, he said—

"Aleen, dearest, best beloved, to you I cannot, and will not, say farewell for ever—for the words would choke me. Blessed with the knowledge that I possess a place in that dear heart, I will struggle on, and hope till hope becomes reality. By day and by night I will dream of you. Your image will ever be before me; though absent you will be present; for so faithfully will my heart treasure your image, that not a feature, nor a line, will ever be forgotten."

Drawing the weeping girl towards him, he pressed his lips upon her fair and beautiful brow; and, whispering the words—

"Remember and hope to the last," hastened from the saloon.

CHAPTER XXI.

WITHOUT the power of locomotion, such as the present period possesses, we must, nevertheless, request our kind readers to leave the fair climate of Italy, and pass over, without the inconvenience of the transit, to the more nebulous climate of Ireland.

At the period that the scene described in our preceding chapter took place, our worthy and respected friend and lawyer, Mr. Briefless, was in a sad state of perplexity; having received, the day before, a letter from Sir William Granville O'Grady's lawyer, stating that a document had been discovered amongst some papers found in a chest at Castle Granville, of a later date than the one purporting to bestow upon Gerald Granville, as a gift, the estate in Oxfordshire and the eighty-thousand pounds in Indian securities; and that this new-found document completely annulled the other. Therefore, that Sir William O'Grady was resolved to dispute the previous document, and claim the whole, as direct heir.

Now, though the worthy lawyer laughed at this daring attempt to contest his favourite's rights, just at the very period that the lawyer was on the point of making a most eligible purchase, yet it annoyed and perplexed him, for he knew the law; and though he felt convinced there was not a shadow of truth in the declaration of the enemy, yet much delay and vexatious costs would ensue; and, moreover, it showed him there was still active villainy at work, to rob his client of his inheritance.

Mr. Briefless was in his study in the middle of a very cautious reply to the London lawyer, when his footman interrupted him by stating that a gentleman was below, who requested an interview immediately.

"Who is he, Thomas? Do you know him?"

"Can't say, positively, I ever saw him, sir; don't think I ever did. Monstrous red face, sir."

"Ah!" muttered the lawyer, as his thoughts rambled back to the man with the monstrous mouth. "Very strange! Always something brewing in that quarter; shouldn't be at all surprised if this man with the red face had something to do with the man with the mouth. Show him up, Thomas; by the Lord Harry, I'll put a finishing stroke to their intrigues, by-and-bye."

The door opened, and the visitor with the red face entered the room, carrying a large sealed brown paper

parcel under his arm. He was a tall and very stout man, with apparently no neck; and his round, large head, perfectly bald, appeared as if growing from the shoulders. The face was broad and full, and as Thomas said, *fiery* red. The stranger limped in his walk, and one shoulder was somewhat higher than the other. He had neither whiskers or beard; and the features of the face had been evidently distorted by some previous fit, or attack of some kind. He appeared in great agitation, and his eyes were fixed upon Mr. Briefless, with so strange and wild an expression, as startled the little lawyer. There was nevertheless, something about the stranger's face, figure &c., that struck him as familiar, or, at least, he had seen some one whom he could not recollect, very like him.

"Sir," began the stranger, laying his hand upon the back of the chair, which Mr. Briefless put forward for him, "sir, may I beg a glass of water? I feel—my God—I do *not* feel." And he pressed his hand to his forehead.

The lawyer sprang to his feet, turning pale, and took the bell in his hand to summon Thomas, when the stranger reeled forward, and fell right against the terrified Thomas who just then entered.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Briefless, "what is all this? Hold him up, Thomas—ring the bell—summon Mrs. Silvertongue—run for Doctor Caterpulse—throw some water over his face."

The noise brought up the housekeeper, who immediately dispatched Thomas for the doctor, while she hastened to raise the stranger's head.

"He's dead, sir!" ejaculated she, "not a doubt of it."

"Good Lord! don't say so," exclaimed the agitated lawyer. "Wouldn't, for fifty guineas, such a thing happen. Good Lord! how pale he is now! Was as red as fire two minutes ago. Ha! here's Caterpulse, thank God!"

"What have you got, Briefless? A case of apoplexy eh?" And he pulled out his instruments to bleed.

"Oh! friend Caterpulse," ejaculated the lawyer, dolefully, "this is a shocking affair—isn't it fearful?"

"No; quite a common case, friend Briefless; but it's all up with him—he's as dead as a herring."

"Don't say that," responded the lawyer, quite bewildered. "Monstrous red face, eh?"

"Not at all," replied the doctor, very quietly putting up his lancet. "On the contrary, it's a very white face. But who is he?"

"Can't say for the life of me. Oh, dear! and you and some friends to dinner."

"Ha! ha!" grinned the doctor. "Don't be alarmed—won't hurt our appetites. He's no relative or friend, then? All right! I wish I had him—worth ten guineas."

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! how you talk!" moaned Mr. Briefless; "no more feeling than a stone—unfortunate man!"

"Send for the coroner, friend Briefless," said the doctor; "sooner the better. Soon find out who he is."

When the inquest was held, the pockets of the deceased were searched. They contained only a few gold coins, some silver, and trifling articles; but neither card, paper, or documents, that could afford any clue as to whence came the unfortunate deceased.

"Good Lord, I forget!" suddenly exclaimed Mr. Briefless; "there is the brown paper parcel in my study—he had that under his arm when he came in. Run, Thomas, and bring it here."

The coroner and jury were on the tip-toe of expectation, their curiosity being already much excited.

Thomas appeared with the parcel.

"Pray, Mr. Briefless," said the coroner, "open that."

The lawyer broke the wax, cut the cord, and drew forth, with exceeding admiration, a large fold of parchment. The moment his eyes rested on the few words on the outer sheet, the worthy lawyer cut a most extraordinary caper, to the amazement of the silent and grave party assembled, exclaiming, in a voice of exultation—

"By the Lord Harry, I have it! Not a doubt of it! Oh, dear, what a fortunate event! Look, Gilmer," turning to his own clerk, "look! you wrote it—do you know that writing?" And then the lawyer, totally forgetting those around him, snapped his fingers, saying, "I have them hip and thigh, by the Lord Harry! I'll unkennel them. What a blaze there will be!"

"Mr. Briefless, Mr. Briefless," impatiently and angrily interrupted the coroner, "this is indecent and most irregular conduct. What is that document you hold in your hand? You seem perfectly acquainted with it."

"Acquainted with it, Mr. Dulcet!" exclaimed the lawyer, in a triumphant tone, "why, I took every word of it down myself. Twenty-seven sheets of parchment; could not be drawn on less. Twenty-five thousand a-year, besides large funded property."

"But what is it? You must not keep us in this way, Mr. Briefless."

"Good Lord! Ah, well, excuse me, gentlemen," said the little lawyer; "I am somewhat bewildered; but you wish to know what this is. This, then, is the lost will of the late Sir Hugh Granville, Baronet, of Granville Castle and Innismoyle, Ireland, and Deer Hurst, Oxfordshire."

"God bless us!" now exclaimed the equally surprised coroner and jury; for all in the City of Cork were well acquainted with the late baronet, and had heard of the proceedings which, in consequence of the will being lost, had given the property to Sir William Granville O'Grady.

"I congratulate you, Mr. Briefless, on the recovery of this will. It is altogether a most extraordinary business," said the coroner. "Is there nothing in that parcel that will give us any information as to who this unfortunate man is, or where he comes from?"

"Nothing whatever, Mr. Dulcet," replied the lawyer; "nothing but the will."

A verdict therefore was returned of "Died by the visitation of God."

Advertisements were put in the daily papers, and

rewards were offered for any information concerning the deceased, who was buried at the expense of the worthy lawyer. Then, without further delay, he posted off to Dublin, after writing the joyful news to our hero, now, without question, Sir Gerald Granville; as in the will it was expressly stated that he should take the name of Granville, and drop the name of Fitzmaurice altogether.

It was the first care of Mr. Briefless to have the will duly registered, with a due observance of all the forms of law then in use. Letters were written to Sir William Granville O'Grady, and also to his solicitors, stating the recovery of the will, and requiring the surrender of all property belonging to the late Baronet.

No trace could Mr. Briefless obtain as to who the person was that brought the lost will back. It appeared a most extraordinary and unaccountable business. At times Mr. Briefless was haunted with a strange feeling that the man was not unknown to him, and that he had seen him before; but the more he strove to recollect where or when he beheld him, the more troubled and perplexed he became. He wrote to Mr. Harmer, and also to Mr. Gardener, who resided in Devonshire for the benefit of his health. From the former gentleman he received an answer, congratulating him on the extraordinary recovery of the will. Mr. Briefless had, moreover, written to Gerald; but he feared the letter would not reach him in Turin, as in the last communication he had received from the Colonel, he stated that he was about to leave, in order to join the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene in Holland.

"By the Lord Harry!" exclaimed Mr. Briefless, "is not this strange—going to get shot at again! Just fancy a man worth twenty-five thousand pounds a-year and more, sleeping with his head in a pool of water; for I am told they put the whole country under water there when fighting, and then standing up the next morning to be riddled, and all for—eh, what's the matter now?" hastily demanded the lawyer, turning sharp round—for he had a

habit of talking out when excited and alone—and a sudden exclamation of surprise from his housekeeper startled him.

"Nothing, sir—nothing," replied Mrs. Silvertongue; "I was only thinking how very uncomfortable it must be to sleep with one's head in a pool of water—very apt to take cold, I should think."

"Yes, my dear woman, and so would any one else, except Sir Gerald Granville. But who's below? I thought I heard a man's voice."

"Oh dear, I forgot," said Mrs. Silvertongue. "A gentleman below in the parlour wishes to see you. The same as was in Cork last year—a Mr. Greathead."

"What!" gasped the lawyer. "God bless me! The man with the mouth come back again! By the Lord Harry, you're not joking, are you, my dear Mrs. S.?"

"Dear me—no, Mr. B." replied the housekeeper, dropping a low curtsy; "I would not think of such a thing."

The lawyer looked puzzled, and then said—

"I must see him; no help for it. Won't look at his mouth though. Don't care that for him now," and he snapped his fingers. "Show him up, my dear Mrs. Silvertongue. By the Lord Harry I have him this time." And the little lawyer laughed out loud, in the midst of which in walked Mr. Greathead, bowing and smirking, and twisting his capacious mouth into all manner of shapes.

"Happy—nay, delighted, to see you looking so well, Mr. B.," said the London solicitor. "Ah, Mr. B. you may laugh now. You have the best of it." And trying to look facetious, he made so frightful a grimace, that Mr. Briefless involuntarily exclaimed—

"Good Lord! what a—! Beg pardon. Take a chair. To what circumstance, my dear sir, do I owe the pleasure of this visit?"

"I wait on you, my dear sir, personally, though at great inconvenience to myself. Very unpleasant, friend

Briefless, crossing the Channel between our two countries. I suffer horribly at sea. Had you seen me—”

“Now God forbid!” exclaimed the little lawyer; “that is, you must know, I suffer myself from that horrid malady, and seeing another, makes it worse.”

“Unquestionably, so it does,” returned Mr. Greathead; “but I come to you by the desire of Sir—that is—Mr. Granville O’Grady; for in your letters you state the late Sir Hugh Granville had the power to will the title and estates, by letters patent, to his nephew, Gerald Granville.”

“You are correct, sir, perfectly correct,” replied Mr. Briefless, rubbing his hands, and looking highly elated. “Sir Hugh obtained the power to do so from his late Majesty of glorious memory, in reward for his services in India. Of course, had there been no will this grant would have been useless, as it was only the *power* to will which the late Sir Hugh had.”

“Understand it perfectly,” rejoined the man with the mouth. “Often the case—break up ‘the entail for certain purposes. However, I have merely to say, that Mr. William O’Grady has no intention whatever to dispute the will or in any way interrupt the succession, therefore, any proceedings in law are unnecessary. Your client can step into the noble property thus unexpectedly restored to him, without any trouble. By-the-bye, have you obtained any information respecting the individual who had the will in his possession?”

Mr. Briefless, as he replied, perceived the keen grey eyes of Mr. Greathead intently fixed upon him. I have had no information whatever on that subject,” said he.

“Most strange! humph! And you cannot bring to your memory any recollection of having seen that individual at any period of your life, eh?”

“I might have seen him,” returned the little lawyer, not liking to be cross-questioned by his brother lawyer. “Perhaps I may recollect him yet. I think I shall.”

"Hah! you *think* so," uttered Mr. Greathead, with what Mr. Briefless thought a start of surprise. "He might have been one of late Baronet's domestics, eh?"

"No; not at all. By the Lord Harry!" exclaimed Mr. Briefless, with great animation, "talking of domestics puts me in mind——"

"Of who?" eagerly interrupted Mr. Greathead, making a most hideous distortion of feature.

Mr. Briefless winced under the infliction; but replied—

"The man, to a certain extent, resembled Mr. Gardener, the late Baronet's secretary. That is the resemblance that has been haunting me. But he was certainly not bald when last I saw him. Neither was he so stout; and Mr. Gardener always wore spectacles. But there was a strong likeness. By-the-bye, I wrote to Mr. Gardener, who is, I believe, in Devonshire; but I have not had an answer yet. He was very ill. Hope he is not dead." And the lawyer fixed his eyes stoutly upon his brother solicitor.

"Hope not, hope not, indeed," responded Mr. Greathead. "Worthy man, I always heard you say. Was'nt present at our trial—confined by some severe fit or other, eh?"

"So his physician declared in court," returned Mr. Briefless, full of thought.

"Well, Mr. Briefless, I will not detain you. I will read over the will; take a few extracts; and return to London. Severe blow to my client, Mr. Briefless. By-the-bye, your worthy and distinguished client, Colonel Gerald Granville, gives mine a very fair chance of stepping into his shoes. Singular that he should prefer a life of such peril, eh?"

"No, not singular," said the lawyer, in a vexed tone. "Thousands of others are just as mad; but I trust he will return at once, when he receives my letter."

"Well, friend Briefless, I will not detain you any longer. Your time is valuable."

Mr. Greathead then extended his hand, which our worthy friend very unwillingly allowed to grasp his; and then Thomas was summoned to shew the London solicitor out.

"I trust in God," exclaimed Mr. Briefless, as the door closed, "I trust I shall never see you again. What a dolt I have been! As sure as I live, I can make out who stole the will; and yet it's a confounded queer piece of business. But I'll find it out—I will write and endeavour to discover if Mr. Gardener is dead. If he's alive, why I'm wrong, that's all."

CHAPTER XXII.

IF our skies in Ireland are not so blue, or our sunshine so bright as in more favoured climes, yet when the sun does shine, and we have a clear blue sky over-head, with its light fleecy clouds flitting across it, the heat tempered by a delicious west wind fanning the cheek in the month of June, how charming and refreshing to the sight are the bright, green meadows and sparkling streams flowing through them which meet the eyes of the traveller as he descends that most beautiful of rivers, the royal Shannon! As this river springs into existence, it at once assumes a noble aspect. Rushing from Lough Allen, it flows placidly at times through the centre of Ireland, about north-east to the westward of south and finally loses itself in the great Atlantic, with a span at its mouth of nine miles or more.

On one of Ireland's brightest and sunniest days, in the early part of June, a large, open boat, gaily-painted, and pulled by six able oarsmen, was descending the Shannon,

having left the well and strongly-fortified town of Bagnagher in the morning. Over the stern of the boat was an awning; but the sides were open, so that those seated in the wide stern of the barge might enjoy the lovely prospect as they slowly descended the stream. Two ladies and one gentleman were beneath the awning, and several domestics, male and female, in the bows of the barge.

The two ladies were the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone and her daughter; the gentleman was an elderly man, of extremely pleasing manners and appearance. He was well-dressed, though with more of the country in his attire than the city. By his numerous attendants and retainers, he was usually styled Mac Guello Phatrick; his name was Fitzpatrick. He owned a very handsome mansion on the borders of Lough-Derg; and considerable property in the vicinity.

To avoid confusion in our narrative, we will here lay before our readers the events that took place in Italy, after the interview between O'Connor and Colonel Granville; and the cause of the sudden return to Ireland of Mrs. Atherstone and her daughter, in order to reside at Atherstone Hall, to which they were proceeding, under the escort of Mr. Fitzpatrick, a very esteemed and old friend of her late husband and herself.

When Colonel Granville left the saloon, a silence of several minutes was maintained by the three individuals remaining in it; for each was busy with his or her own thoughts. Mrs. Atherstone was completely bewildered, if not confounded, by the question which Colonel Granville proposed to her brother. Aleen knew not what to think. Could her lover really have any foundation for his singular question? As to Ulick O'Connor, he very soon recovered his composure—though his look and manner was somewhat troubled, as he turned to his sister, saying—

“Let what has passed be banished from your memory. I bear no malice to Colonel Fitzmaurice for his strange and unmeaning question; but there is one thing, Matilda, that

I insist on your immediately fulfilling, or I must now claim the guardianship of my child."

These words made Aleen tremble, and her cheek blanch. A feeling of faintness came over her; and her beautiful head sank on the shoulder of her startled and alarmed aunt.

Ulick O'Connor saw the change, and marked the look of his daughter; and a strange smile, for a moment, rested on his lip.

"What can you mean, Ulick?" asked Mrs. Atherstone, eagerly. "Say what you require. Do with me what you will; but, in mercy, do not rob me of my child." And she burst into tears, embracing her weeping niece with more, if possible, than a mother's tenderness.

"Hear me, Matilda," said O'Connor; and his voice lost its coldness and harshness. "I am no tyrant—and have no wish to inflict unnecessary sorrow upon you or my child. You are aware that formerly I staked life and fortune in the cause of James the Second; and the time is now coming when I shall again peril my life in the cause of his son. I have received, this day, secret intelligence that Queen Anne is stricken with a mortal malady. A few days will end her reign."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Atherstone. "This is sudden and melancholy intelligence."

"Yet such is the fact," continued O'Connor. "The King of France intends fitting out a powerful armament, to send over to Scotland with the Chevalier St. George. I intend to join the squadron when it is ready. I had a double object in coming here. One of a political nature; the other to see you and Aleen. Embarked heart and soul in this holy cause, there is nothing on earth that I would not sacrifice to ensure its success. Now could a party be raised in Ireland, by men of family, wealth, and influence, to co-operate with the same class in England, our success would be certain. To strengthen, then, our party in Ireland, is my object. When I came here, it was with the intention of proposing a husband to my daughter

—a man of rank, of extensive property in Ireland, which, in addition to his personal exertions, he is willing to embark in our cause. He has already carried arms in the Spanish service—is young, remarkably handsome, and, in every way, a suitable husband even for *my* daughter.”

Aleen scarcely breathed: her hand grasped that of her aunt convulsively; but neither she nor Mrs. Atherstone uttered a word.

O'Connor continued—

“This gentleman's father I have known for years. His son, Sir William Granville O'Grady, is the person of whom I speak.”

“What!” exclaimed Aleen, starting into life and energy, as if electrified, and standing erect, with her eyes fixed unflinchingly upon her father. “That man? He who, by some base contrivance, robbed the preserver of my life of his rank and his inheritance? Never, never, father! In all else, I am your obedient child. I will renounce, at your will, all the dearest ties of my heart—go whither it may please you—endure privation, poverty, even the fearful agony of parting from the fondest, the most beloved of beings—my more than mother. But Aleen O'Connor will never become the wife of the man you name!”

“Girl!” almost fiercely exclaimed O'Connor, “you are over-hasty—you wrong your father if you suppose he ever intended to force his daughter's inclinations in a husband.”

“Dearest father!” ejaculated Aleen, throwing herself upon her knees, in a passion of tears, and catching his hand in hers; “forgive me, I was, indeed, wrong and undutiful.”

There was an evident struggle in the breast of O'Connor, as he gazed, for a moment, upon the fair and beautiful girl. He parted the hair from her clear and open forehead, and kissed her brow with a good deal of affection in his manner, saying—

“Go, my dear girl, leave me with your aunt. You shall

not be separated ; nor shall I require anything unreasonable of you. You deserted the faith of your fathers ; and deep and bitter as was the pang which that gave me, I bore it. I was willing, seeing your attachment to him who saved your life, to wave old prejudices and feelings, and even give him my child, requiring him only to act as his sire did before him. I do not blame his refusal, because he acted on principles imbibed from his very infancy. But we will not talk over these things now. We may meet again, when the banished and proscribed O'Connor may place his foot upon the soil of his ancestors without having the blood-hounds of the oppressor at his heels."

Aleen could not reply to these words ; for she felt that anything she could say would make little impression on her father's mind. Pressing his hand to her lips with affection and reverence she left the room.

"You are embarking in a wild and futile enterprise, Ulick," said Mrs. Atherstone, breaking the silence that followed Aleen's departure, and looking at her brother affectionately and sadly. "The succession to the throne of Great Britain is too firmly secured to be shaken by any efforts of the Jacobite party. Confiscation, imprisonment, and death, will be the result now, as it was before."

"You are wrong, sister ; the succession is far from being securely settled. But leave politics aside. I mentioned there was one condition you must fulfil ; and that is to leave this city at once without any further interview with Colonel Fitzmaurice, and proceed to Ireland. You have a noble and beautiful residence there, and you have not visited your people for years. Sir William Granville O'Grady will visit you there. I do not ask you to use any influence with Aleen, in persuading her to favour Sir William's proposals. She is prejudiced now ; she is young. But, at all events, let Sir William have a fair chance. We know not what time and absence may do."

A smile passed over the fine intellectual features of

Mrs. Atherstone. It was a smile that expressed much, very much indeed. But O'Connor did not see it.

"I must leave this city at once," resumed he, "after my interview, to-morrow, with Colonel Fitzmaurice, I shall cross the Alps into Switzerland, and travel to Paris as fast as possible. You had better proceed through the Tyrol, and afterwards descend the Rhine. You will thus avoid the seat of war. The journey is not much longer."

"I am extremely willing," said Mrs. Atherstone, "to reside in Ireland, and will be ready to leave Italy as soon as I can make arrangements for my journey. I certainly expect that you, Ulick, will explain this ungracious treatment of Colonel Granville, to himself personally."

"Say no more on that subject," said O'Connor, "I am neither ungracious nor ungrateful. The Colonel is a brave and gallant soldier; his father inflicted, undesignedly, on me the deepest wound one man can inflict upon another. He won the hand of the only woman I ever loved."

"Then who, Ulick," asked Mrs. Atherstone, eagerly, and looking her brother steadily in the face, "who is, or was, Aleen's mother?"

A slight flush passed over the cheek of O'Connor, as he replied—

"Some time or other you shall know; but I have provided that the secret shall not die with me. Take this," and he drew from within his vest a curious miniature case, richly jewelled; "should you hear of my death, for it may be my fate to fall in this struggle for a crown, you may open that locket, which contains a portrait. Here is the key," handing her a minute gold key. "Promise me faithfully—give me your word, which I know you hold sacred, that you will not open that case, unless you hear of my death or receive permission from me to do so. Within you will find the name of Aleen's mother—the date of her birth, and the place she was born in, with several other particulars. I do not intend to give you

this, now ; but circumstances have caused me to change my intention. Stay, I have another motive acting on my mind. Should Aleen consent to accept the hand of Sir William Granville O'Grady—then, whether I shall be living or dead, it is necessary you should know who is Aleen's mother. Now, God bless you, Matilda !”

And embracing his sister with more affection than he had ever evinced, he hastily retired, leaving Mrs. Atherstone much affected, and in tears.

What passed the following day between Ulick O'Connor and Colonel Granville, Mrs. Atherstone knew not ; but she heard that both her brother and the Colonel quitted Turin the same evening. In a day or two Mrs. Dalton having departed for Florence, Mrs. Atherstone and her niece set out on their journey home. Aleen's spirits seemed much depressed ; but, seeing that her aunt gave way to despondency, she exerted herself to the utmost to appear cheerful.

After a tedious and long journey they reached England in safety.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HAVING rested a week or more, they left England for Dublin, where they met Mr. Fitzpatrick, an old and esteemed friend of her husband's. At his pressing invitation Mrs. Atherstone consented to pass a short time with his good lady at their residence, situated on the borders of Lough Derg.

Aleen's spirits revived on reaching Ireland, for, in Dublin, she heard the unexpected news of her lover's restoration to rank, and to the property of his uncle, by the recovery of the lost will. This intelligence acted like

a magic spell in restoring her usual health and vivacity; for she at once came to the conclusion that her father would never think of uniting her to the dreaded Mr. O'Grady, now deprived of his rank, wealth, and, consequently influence. A vast weight was thus lifted from her mind and thoughts; for, although her father had declared he would never force her inclinations, yet the idea of even seeing and hearing a suitor, whom no circumstances could ever make her look upon with any other feelings than those of detestation, pained her to the heart.

The last words Gerald uttered as they parted, came fresh to her memory—"Remember and hope!" And she did hope. As to remembrance, her heart too plainly told her she could never forget.

At times, too, the singular words the Colonel addressed to her father, demanding of him what proofs he had ever given that Aleen *was* his child, recurred to her memory, particularly in the lone hours of the night; and she wondered what could have given birth in the Colonel's mind to the necessity for such an inquiry.

Mrs. Atherstone, herself, thought much of the Colonel's words. The singular change in her brother's looks, when the question was put to him, and the agitation he could ill hide, caused her great surprise, and left open a wide field for the imagination to dwell upon.

After a short stay in Dublin, Mrs. Atherstone and Aleen, with Mr. Fitzpatrick, set out for the west. At Banagher they found a handsome barge belonging to Mr. Fitzpatrick, waiting their arrival to take them down the Shannon. Accordingly, they all embarked and proceeded along the noble stream. Aleen enjoyed the lovely scenes that opened every mile to their view. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who loved his country and all belonging to it, was in high spirits. The day, as stated in the commencement of this chapter, was an uncommonly lovely one; the stream, clear and beautiful, reflected, as in a mirror, the bright sky and its gossamer clouds. Every rock, every

distant crag, had its legend of fairy and elf and leprechauns.

"Do you know, my dear young lady," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "how this glorious stream gained its name of Shannon?"

"No, my dear sir," replied Aleen in high spirits, and delighting in legends and fairy lore, "pray tell me any fairy legend of the beautiful lake we are approaching; I love stories of the past. While in Italy, I picked up many a tale of tower and lake."

"Well, then, I will make a bargain with you," said Mr. Fitzpatrick, rubbing his hands and laughing, "I will tell you a legion of Lough Derg, into which we shall soon run, provided you tell me a tale of Italy—a country full of romance of the past."

"I agree," returned the maiden; "you give me a legend of your Irish lake, and you shall have one of an Italian lake."

"Come, that's agreed; your lady mother is witness to the contract," rejoined Mr. Fitzpatrick. "I never was out of my own country, but I will maintain that no part of Europe can boast of more natural beauties, in point of scenery, than the Emerald Isle. But first let me tell you how this stream acquired its name. A few words will do that. There was once a Princess as amiable as she was lovely, and as modest as she was amiable. Her name was Seinan—pronounced Shannon. This Princess, like Diana, was surprised bathing by her lover. Struck with terror and shame, she clasped her hands, turned her eyes to heaven, and leaped into the stream, never to rise again. From that event the river takes its name. So says tradition. But do you see that low, long promontory stretching itself right into Lough Derg, and the huge rock at the point? That is called the Piper's Rock. And now I will give you my legend, which I call The Piper of Lough Derg."

The men rested on their oars, and the barge glided gently along, while Mr. Fitzpatrick related his fairy tale.

It was one of those fanciful and poetical legends so common among the Irish people, and his hearers were entranced by the fascinating narrative.

When he had concluded, Mr. Fitzpatrick received the thanks and praises of his fair companions.

"But recollect, my dear young lady," he observed, "you have your Legend of a Lake to give me in return. Before you commence, let me point out to you all the beauties of this glorious lake. Those grand and towering heights are the Arra Mountains, Slieve Boughty and Slant Bernagh, stretching their vast arms far out into the lake."

"And those islands," remarked Aleen, "how beautiful and green they look! I dare say they have very romantic names."

"I lament to destroy your delusion," said Mr. Fitzpatrick, with a smile. "This, for instance, which we are now passing, is Crow Island; the further is Cow Island; and another is Hare Island. But the most remarkable of the lot is Innis Caltra."

"Oh, that sounds infinitely better," said Mrs. Atherstone. "Is not that the island on which stands the seven churches?"

"The same, dear madam. But, as Innis Caltra lies within a few miles of my residence, we shall have plenty of time to visit it. And now I claim your promise, fair lady. I am longing to hear your legend of a foreign lake."

"You shall have it, my dear sir," replied Aleen; "but I cannot promise you any fairy lore in it. We were caught, in an excursion on the Lago Maggiore, during a thunder storm, and sought shelter in an old building called the Tower of Sforza, situated on a little island called Pescatore. We were not long there, however, before a gentleman of middle age entered the tower, and politely requested us to take shelter in his villa, a little further up the island. To shorten my preface, we accepted the Count de Ricci's invitation, for it turned out a tem-

pestuous night. His lady was a most kind and courteous dame; and, to pass some of the hours of a dull evening, she related to us a legend of the old tower, as it was handed down by tradition. Of their ancestor, the Count de Ricci, (one of the principal personages in the tale,) a portrait was shown us, said to be the only one saved from the old picture gallery of the fortress, that once stood upon the main land, just opposite the little island.

“I will now give you my legend, which I shall call **BIANCA, or SFORZA’S TOWER**.

“During the rule of that cruel and heartless tyrant, Filippo-Maria Visconti, Duke of Milan, there dwelt upon the borders of Lago Maggiore a Milanese nobleman, named Ludovico Count de Ricci. He was at this time a widower, with an only daughter, just seventeen years old, of exceeding beauty, and, for the period she lived in, singularly accomplished; that is, she could read and write, play upon the harp, and was said to be fond of the study of astrology and botany.

“The Count de Ricci was in his sixty-fifth year, but still hale and vigorous. Having been a great warrior in his youth, he grew stern and rigorous in his old age; and notwithstanding his great revenues, he was somewhat parsimonious. He shut himself up, with his young and lovely daughter, in his feudal fortress, where he kept only a few retainers, neither receiving nor visiting the neighbours in his vicinity. Still his daughter was gratified in every wish of her heart, for the stern old Count dearly loved her.

“The castle enjoyed a most glorious view over the wide expanse of Lago Maggiore and its lovely islands, and also the beautiful country surrounding Bavino. It may be thought that Bianca led but a joyless life, shut up in the old castle, with no other amusements than strolling through the extensive gardens into the great picture-gallery, and the magnificent armoury, where hung armour of all sorts—chain armour and plate armour—helmets like eagles and griffins, with wonderfully curious visors,

which often puzzled the fair girl, when looking at them, to conceive how the bearers contrived to breathe or exist with such a load of ugly iron on their heads; to say nothing of all which encumbered their bodies.

“Though Bianca acquired the credit of being an adept in astrology and botany, she knew scarcely anything of those sciences. She loved dearly to gaze into the clear vault of Heaven, when the stars sparkled brightly, or when the moon shone, to view, from one of the castle turrets, the lunar beams resting upon the islands that lay tranquil and still, with the clear water rippling on their shores. Then, with her favourite maiden, Lucia, she wandered amid the exquisite scenery that surrounded her abode, and gathered the innumerable wild flowers and plants which abounded in that favoured region. The castle of the Count de Ricci was within a league of Bavino, surrounded by fields of maze, mulberry and chesnut trees, the net vine climbing and twisting itself amid the boughs of the loftiest trees. The air of this delightful country was mild and balmy, and the scent of sweet flowers filled it with fragrance. Even in winter, when the hills, covered with snow, present an aspect somewhat cheerless, the eye rests with delight upon the Borromeo Isles, which seem to retain perpetual verdure and beauty. At the period of our tale, however, these islands remained almost in the state in which nature created them. To the Count Vitaliano Borromeo they owe their magnificent gardens, terraces and pavilions.

“On one of those Islands, the most barren of the three, and called the Island of Fishers, the old Count de Ricci had built a lofty tower; and his daughter Bianca, who loved to spend some of the summer days there, had it tastefully fitted up with several apartments, and a large garden surrounding it. There she frequently retired during the heats of summer, with her two female attendants, and remained there for weeks. At that period there were no inhabitants. Now it contains near two hundred and a church, though the buildings offer a

strange, but not unpleasant, contrast to the magnificence of Isola Bella.

“The old Count de Ricci was highly connected; and at one time lived in great splendour at the court of the ferocious and bloodthirsty tyrant, Giovanni-Maria. The Countess de Ricci was the sister of the unfortunate wife of this tyrant duke; who, in the end, was assassinated by some of the nobles; and, to the surprise of the court, and the indignation of the nobility, his wife, Beatrice Tenda, married, immediately after his succession, Filippo-Maria. Somewhat disgusted, the Count de Ricci retired from court, and lived in the seclusion of his castle, refusing the new duke his request that he would reside in Milan.

“It was the month of June, and Bianca Ricci crossed over to the Island of Fishers, with her usual attendants, and took up her abode in the tower, intending to spend some weeks there. For the period she lived in, she had a choice collection of manuscripts. She was fond of painting, and painted well. She had a handsome barge, for recreation on the lake; a beautiful garden to walk in, and musical instruments to play upon. Altogether, the fair Bianca seemed to want nothing on earth to make her happy. Yet she felt not in her usual spirits. She had left her father somewhat disturbed and uneasy at intelligence from Milan. Filippo-Maria, though by no means a warlike prince, was, nevertheless, a keen observer; and, from the moment he became Duke, he resolved to augment his territories, by no means scrupulous as to the means. The famous Francesco Carmagnola, from a simple cuirassier had become one of the greatest captains in Italy. One by one, all the petty tyrants of Lombardy were conquered by him. As he gained power, the Duke increased in wickedness and tyranny, and committed many acts fully as bad as his predecessor. From his wife, though she was nearly twenty years older than himself, he gained his throne; but once firmly seated, he determined to get rid of her.

Having a presentiment of her fate, she dispatched a courier to the Count de Ricci, requesting him to come to Milan, as she feared the Duke had designs against her fair name, if not her life. The Count, therefore, resolved to go, for a time, to Milan, shortly after his daughter's departure for the Tower of Fishers. He left his castle, with a dozen or so of armed retainers, and proceeded to Milan; for he was greatly attached to his late wife's sister, and he hoped to be of some assistance to her, in shielding her from the designs of her tyrannical husband, intending to form a strong party amongst the old nobility.

"The Lady Bianca passed a fortnight in perfect tranquillity on the little Island of Pescatore; but, at the end of that period, she began to wonder that no tidings reached her of her father's proceedings, and she felt considerable uneasiness about the Duchess, whom she remembered, when a little girl, to have been very fond of her.

"One very fine and tranquil evening, just a half hour before sunset, Bianca was seated at the open window of her favourite chamber in the tower, looking out upon the glassy surface of the lake, undisturbed by the slightest breath of air. As the sun reached the horizon, the vast body of water resembled a sheet of gold. Just then her attention was caught by the appearance of two boats rowing rapidly across the lake. Presently, she perceived the leading one turn its prow for the Island of Fishers; and, as it came nearer, she could see distinctly that it was impelled over the water by one man. It was an extremely light, buoyant skiff; and, being vigorously pulled, went swiftly over the smooth surface of the lake. Nevertheless, the other boat, a long galley-kind of craft, came even more rapidly onwards, and it became very evident to Bianca, that the last boat pursued the first. Her attention thus became excited; and, calling her maid Lucia, they both anxiously watched the progress of the boats. The galley was pulled by four oarsmen; and

in her stern stood two men, both in armour, for the last rays of the sun fell upon their steel harness, which sparkled glaringly in the eyes of the maidens. As the skiff approached, the Count's daughter could plainly perceive that the person who rowed was evidently a young Signor, for he wore a plumed cap, and his attire was such as a gentleman of rank might wear. He appeared as if he pulled for his life; and those who pursued, seemed as if they thirsted for his blood, for fierce oaths and violent execrations burst from the lips of the two figures in armour in the galley, exciting the four men to pull with might and main, and prevent the fugitive from landing on the Island of Fishers.

Bianca no sooner heard the words of the men in the barge, than she said to Lucia, "Run, girl, and call old Tomaso and his son. Tell them to go quickly to the beach, or blood will be shed." And, snatching up her mantle and hood, she hurried from the chamber, with the intention of preventing, if she could, an assassination under the very walls of the Tower. On gaining the open door of the edifice, Bianca saw Lucia and the old gardener come hurrying from the garden at the back. The gardener looked pale and much frightened, as Lucia had told him that a murder would be perpetrated on the beach before the Tower. Heedless of the old man's representations that she was running into danger, Bianca flew towards the beach, and beheld a sight that, for an instant, caused her cheek to blanch and her heart to beat with horror. The young Signor in the skiff had leaped ashore as soon as his boat touched the beach, and was instantly followed by the two armed men in the barge; for when Bianca looked towards the lake, she perceived the three figures engaged with swords; and the same instant one of the men cased in steel staggered and fell; while the other, before the youth could recover his sword, ran his weapon right through his unarmed breast. The youth fell backwards as if slain. A wild shriek escaped the lips of Lucia as Bianca rushed

towards the spot, calling out in loud tones on the assassins to beware how they committed murder on the lands of the Count de Ricci. Two men now jumped from the barge; and before the Count's daughter reached the spot, they lifted the wounded man in armour into the boat; the other man sprang in, and the next instant they pulled rapidly out into the lake, rowing in the direction of Isola Bella.

"Greatly agitated at the scene she had witnessed, Bianca, followed by her maiden and the trembling gardener and his son, reached the beach where lay the stranger to all appearance dead. By his side lay his broken sword. Had it not broken, he would probably have defeated his antagonists; for he was a tall and powerful young man of scarcely more than twenty-five years of age,

"'Merciful Heaven!' ejaculated Bianca, 'I fear he is slain! What can be done?' And kneeling down, she perceived the blood flowing copiously from a wound in the right breast. But he was not dead; for after a moment, Lucia called out—

"'Dear mistress, he breathes!'

"'Ha, thanks be to Heaven!' cried the Count's daughter. 'Do you, Marco, (speaking to the stupified gardener's son) take the skiff, row to the Castle, and bring back old Jerome. He is a skilful leech. Bring with you, also, two of the men well armed, for fear these assassins should return.'

"The Lady Bianca, though only seventeen years of age, was, nevertheless, a courageous and high-spirited maiden, possessing considerable presence of mind, and a most generous and amiable disposition. With Lucia's assistance she staunched the blood: but the stranger, though they bathed his temples with all kinds of restoratives in their possession, still remained quite senseless. He nevertheless breathed somewhat stronger. How to get him to the Tower, puzzled them all; for he was much too heavy for old Tomaso, even with their assistance, and

night was coming on. However, Bianca insisted upon trying to move him, even if it were only to the shelter of the boat-house, which was close beside the spot. Though pale as death, and his eyes closed, yet it was easy to perceive that the stranger was eminently handsome, and his attire rich. The sword he had broken had a jewelled hilt, but was more an ornamental, than a serviceable weapon.

“With great difficulty the fair girl and her assistants drew the stranger within the shed, during which operation he groaned several times. Having laid him upon some sails, a little wine was poured down his throat. Lucia had procured a lamp, and in a very short time, to Bianca’s infinite relief, the stranger opened his eyes very feebly, and almost immediately reclosed them. The castle was little more than two miles from the tower, therefore, as the water was smooth, and the skiff light, Marco, in little more than an hour, returned with the leech, and two of the castle retainers. The stranger was then carried into the tower, and consigned to the care of the leech and the kind-hearted old dame, who superintended the culinary department. Bianca then retired to her chamber to converse with Lucia upon the strange adventure of the evening.

“To say that the fair Bianca felt no curiosity concerning the handsome stranger, would be unnatural even in this unromantic age. But at that period, when chivalry had not totally perished, and when maidens of rank thought it not beneath their dignity to attend to the sufferings of wounded knights, such an event as that which had occurred before her own eyes was sure not only to excite her curiosity, but strongly awaken her sympathy for the sufferer.

“Three days passed over, and still the stranger’s condition did not warrant any very strong hope that he would survive the terrible sword-thrust he had received. But on the fourth and fifth day he got visibly better, Bianca herself attending to the administration of the remedies prescribed.

"At the end of a week he was able to converse; and Bianca was informed by the old dame who principally attended to his wants, that he earnestly implored an interview with her. He had left his couch, and was sitting in an easy chair, propped with pillows. When Bianca heard this request, her heart beat somewhat quicker. She rose, and, followed by the old dame, proceeded to the chamber of the invalid, in one of the lower rooms of the tower.

"As she entered the apartment, with a little more colour in her cheek than usual, the stranger made an effort to rise, but grew deadly pale from the exertion: and the maiden, seeing his languid look, stepped forward, and holding out her hand, as if to stay any further effort, said in her melodious voice—

"'I pray you keep your chair. You are not yet capable of any exertion.'

"The stranger took the hand held out before she could withdraw it, and most humbly and respectfully, and with something of deep devotion in the manner, kissed it saying—

"'Ah, lady, you have been a ministering angel to me. A life's service cannot repay your gift to me of life. Your cruel fate! from me you must receive tidings that will pain your heart.'

Bianca's cheek grew pale, as, sinking into a seat, she exclaimed—

"'Evil tidings! my father! Can you know anything of him? My connections are so few, that evil tidings must relate to him.'

"'Alas!' replied the stranger, 'such is the case! But be not alarmed more than is needful, for my tidings affect not his life.'

"'Good Heavens! Then what has happened? My dear father! And how came you, a stranger, to know of his misfortune—for such, I suppose, your tidings mean!'

"'Misfortune, dear lady, it certainly is. But not to keep you in suspense, let me state that the object of

your father in coming to Milan was to serve that cruelly-injured lady, the Duchess."

" 'Holy Virgin, my aunt!' responded Bianca. 'What has occurred to her?'

" 'Your aunt!' echoed the stranger, in a low voice, and looking extremely dejected. 'I did not know the Duchess was your aunt. Worse and worse!' Then looking up into the agitated maiden's face, he added—'Your father, dear lady, immediately on reaching Milan, was seized, with all his attendants, and, by order of Filippo-Maria, imprisoned in the fortress of Camagna, in order that he might not interfere with his cruel and frightful designs upon the life of his Duchess.'

" 'Ah, Madonna!' cried Bianca, 'I felt it. Something of evil hung upon my spirits all this last month—I felt an unaccountable depression. My poor father, in his old age, a prisoner! Alas! the tyrant may take his life!'

" 'No, lady, no,' said the stranger. 'The Duke will never injure the Count de Ricci. The deed for which he imprisoned him—' he paused, hesitated, and then added, in a low, mournful voice—'is done! He will be liberated shortly.'

" 'What deed is done?' demanded the maiden, nerving herself to hear the worst, and fixing her eyes upon the stranger. 'Keep me not, I pray you, in suspense. What of my aunt?'

" 'Alas, lady!' replied the stranger, 'the Duchess is no more! She was cruelly put to death by her tyrant husband. As she was many years older than himself, he sought some excuse to get rid of her, who, in fact, had raised him to the ducal throne. I will not pain you, dear lady, by relating the details of this execrable murder; for, by my knightly faith, the accusation against the Duchess was a false one. Others suffered also—one, the dearest friend of my boyhood, perished miserably tortured, and I barely escaped the same doom, for daring to proclaim them both guiltless, and offering to combat to the death their accuser. For a time, I took refuge with Sir

Gian Beltrato, near Bavino. As I was returning one evening from Isola Bella in a light skiff, I was tracked by four assassins, who had discovered my residence. I thought to escape their galley, pulled only by a couple of boatmen; but two of the armed assassins stripped, and applied themselves to the oar, and I soon saw that escape was impossible. I turned my boat by a blessed chance for this island—my small, light sword broke against the steel harness of one of the assassins; the other ran me through the body; and, but for you, dear lady, the days of Francesco Sforza had ended ere this.’

“‘Francesco Sforza!’ echoed Bianca, in a tone of the greatest surprise; for already had the achievements of Francesco created wonder and applause in the kingdoms of Italy. But Bianca’s thoughts were too full of her father’s misfortune, and her aunt’s miserable fate, to think of aught else, much as she was surprised by learning who the wounded knight was.

“After a pause, she looked up, exclaiming—

“‘Merciful Heaven! what am I to do to assist my poor father?’

“Listen to me, lady,’ responded Francesco; ‘I will, with the blessing of God, release your father, if he is not liberated in a week or so. My wound is getting rapidly well, and my faithful followers are marching into Lombardy from Tuscany. You have heard, doubtless, how the year before this I lost my gallant father. Alas! he was drowned in crossing the little river of Pescara, trying to save the life of a page. His weighty armour buried him beneath the flood.’

“‘I heard of his sad fate from my father,’ said Bianca, timidly, ‘and how his son Francesco, in that trying time, won the admiration of his father’s followers, who all took the oath of fidelity to him. But what brought Francesco Sforza to the court of the Duke of Milan?’

“And she fixed her eyes upon the Condottiere’s pale but handsome features.

“‘I was brought up, dear lady, by your good and too

generous aunt, and was page for a short time to her ferocious first husband. At the time my poor father lost his life, we were marching to the relief of Aquila, which was defended by the famous Braccio De Montoni and his condottieri. It was predicted by an astrologer, some years ago, that rivers boded danger to the race of Sforza, and Braccio De Montoni, consulting the same astrologer, was informed that he would survive his great rival but a short time. Startled by the sudden and lamentable fate of my father, Braccio nevertheless prepared to encounter the troops of Joanna, Queen of Naples, and the Duke of Milan. My father's captains were bound to serve under the banners of Filippo Maria, and I, having accepted their oaths of fidelity, led them under his banner against my late father's rival. Braccio de Montoni was overwhelmed by the superior force brought against him, and was defeated, wounded and captured. His wound was not mortal; nevertheless, his proud spirit rejected all aid—he never uttered a word from the period of his capture—refused all sustenance, and died in three days.'

"The young captain paused, and Bianca, seeing he was greatly fatigued by the exertion of speaking so much, insisted on his saying no more till the next day, when she would visit him again, and consult on the best means of rescuing her father from the power of the duke.

"Francesco Sforza sighed; lamented the state of inactivity his wound forced him to remain in, kissed the hand extended to him, in bidding him good night; and, as the door closed upon the figure of the Count's daughter, he mentally vowed he would win the fair Bianca's love, or carry her image in his heart till death.

"And what were the maiden's ruminations as she retired to her chamber? Mingled with thoughts of her father's captivity, and the miserable fate of her aunt, the image of the gallant Francesco, already one of the greatest commanders in Italy—the favourite leader of the Neapolitan Queen, and possessor of considerable fiefs and lordships, made a deep impression on the maiden's heart, and

occupied no inconsiderable share of her contemplations. What would her proud, though fond father think, if he imagined she had bestowed her love upon the son of a peasant? For it was known that Giacomo Sforza, Francesco's father, was a peasant of Cotignola in Romagna. But Bianca little imagined the grandeur to which Francesco Sforza was destined to rise."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALEEN paused awhile, and then resumed her narrative, as follows:—

"June had gone by, and so had the third part of the sultry month of July, with its intense blue firmament, without a cloud to check the ardent rays of a scorching sun.

"Totally heedless of the heat—a splendid body of horse was traversing the country between Lodi and Milano. The men were cased from head to heel, in the ponderous plate armour used at that period; even their steeds had to bear their load of iron panoply. They made a dazzling appearance, for no troops then in Italy were so gallantly and magnificently armed and mounted as the cavalry under the renowned Francesco Sforza.

"At the head of the troop, which amounted to nearly six hundred men, rode two cavaliers; one only, however, cased in mail. This cavalier wore a singularly magnificent suit of Milan steel richly edged with gold, and beautifully embossed and engraved. Golden spurs graced his heels; and a lofty crimson plume added to his already great stature. His steed was glossy black, large-boned, fiery, and quite capable of the rider's great weight. The visor of this knight was up, disclosing the handsome and manly features of Francesco Sforza. His companion,

although not cased in complete mail, was a powerful man of middle age—well armed in cuirass and salade, with a heavy lance in its rest, and a ponderous mace at his saddle bow. This cavalier was Sforza's famous captain, Nicolo Borso.

“ Though perhaps a little paler than usual, Francesco Sforza was completely cured of his desperate wound. Before his departure from the old Tower on the Island of Fishers, Sforza and Bianca De Ricci became lovers, and plighted their faith and troth to each other with all the devotion and fervour of young hearts loving for the first time. Before his departure from the tower, Sforza explained to Bianca how he came to be in Milan at the period of her father's incarceration. The Duke owed his father large sums of money for services at various periods. This money he refused to pay unless the son bound himself to his service alone.

“ Leaving his forces in Romagna, Sforza visited Milan. Disgusted by the cruelty exercised towards the Duchess and the companion of his boyhood, Sforza defied the Duke to prove their guilt, offering, according to the custom of the times, to fight to the death their accuser. The Duke resolved to rid himself of so bold a champion; but Sforza, warned in time, left Milan. Assassins, nevertheless, tracked his steps; and he would have fallen a victim but for Bianca.

“ Francesco was now on his way to the fortress where the Count de Ricci was confined; resolved to take it by storm; and then, with his whole force—which amounted to near four thousand men, horse and foot—approach Milan and demand a settlement of his claims from the Duke. If he refused, he would threaten to join his force to that of Nicolo Piccinino—the ablest of Braccio de Montoni's captains, who was then collecting the scattered forces of his late leader.

“ Though generous, high-spirited, and far superior, in many respects, to the great leaders of condottieri then existing throughout Italy, and even fond of cultivating his

mind, at times, by study, Francesco Sforza was ambitious of military distinction and renown. Aware that he must find money for his troops, and conciliate his captains by the highest amount of pay afforded by crowned heads to fight their battles, he would, notwithstanding the baseness and perfidy of Filippo Maria, enter his service if he liquidated his claims, and restored to the Count de Ricci his possessions—for the Duke had already seized upon his fiefs, on the plea that, some months before, he had sent a body of retainers to the aid of the Lord of Lodi—whom the Duke inveigled to Milan, and afterwards executed both him and his son. He served one of the Becconia the same way—and the ruler of Como would have shared a similar fate had he not submitted. The Duke had long wished for some excuse to seize upon the territory and wealth of the Count de Ricci; but his relationship to his Duchess, and his giving no cause of offence, were obstructions not easily got over. At length, his arming his retainers to aid the Signor of Lodi, and his fierce remonstrance against the Duke's treatment of his Duchess, gave him the opportunity he desired. He imprisoned the old Count, and seized his possessions, leaving his daughter, Bianca, the Island of Fishers, and a small pension to live upon. But, in her lover, Bianca had a powerful supporter.

“The Duke considered that Sforza was slain by his emissaries. His amazement and disgust were, therefore, great when he learned that Francesco Sforza was not only alive, but had joined his bands in the vicinity of Lodi. What his purpose was, he could not conjecture.

“In the mean time, Sforza, with his four thousand cuirassiers, advanced against the strong fortress of Pizzighitone; followed by four hundred of his foot soldiers, and four large bombards—a formidable cannon for those days. Pizzighitone, built upon the banks of the Serio—close to its confluence with the Adda—was considered one of the strongest fortresses belonging to the Duke. In after years it became celebrated as the prison of

Francis the First, after the battle of Pavia. Nevertheless, Francesco Sforza took it by assault in four days, before the troops sent by Filippo Maria to its relief could reach it.

"After this exploit, Sforza, with the old Count de Ricci—released from captivity—under his protection, retired with his band; and, passing Cremona, encamped in a strong position; and then commenced negotiations with the enraged Duke of Milan.

"While these were pending, the old Count became extremely anxious to see his daughter; and Francesco Sforza was equally so. Accordingly, they both agreed, vested in plain armour, and attended only by a couple of squires, to ride to Lago Maggiore, and the Island of Fishers. Leaving the camp early one morning, in the month of August, and avoiding Cremona, they travelled a part of the country where they were not likely to be recognised.

"As they rode side by side, Francesco perceived that the old Count de Ricci was extremely gloomy and abstracted in his manner. He was aware that his deliverer from captivity owed his life to his daughter's care; though not one word of their mutual love had been communicated to the Count by Sforza. But as they rode along, Francesco determined to reveal the truth.

"'Count de Ricci,' said he, 'I beg you will listen to what I have to say, with patience and temper. Your daughter saved my life. I released you from captivity. Still, I am your daughter's debtor, and would willingly offer my life to do her a service.'

"'You have proved that,' returned the Count, drily, 'on the battlements of Pizzighitone. But go on.'

"'Well, Count de Ricci,' resumed Sforza, in a firm tone; 'I love your daughter!'

"'Precisely what I knew would be the case, when you told me she saved your life. Benissimo! What next?' returned the stern old warrior; his features showing no trace of displeasure or otherwise.

"Francesco Sforza was aware of the old man's charac-

ter, from his daughter Bianca, therefore he replied, quietly—

“‘We have plighted our troth, Count de Ricci; and humbly hope you will sanction our affection; and accept me, unworthy as I am, as your future son-in-law.’

“‘Humph!’ muttered the Count. ‘These are strange times, when a peasant’s son aspires to the hand of one who has royal blood in her veins.’

“‘True,’ replied Francesco, calmly; but ‘that peasant made crowned heads tremble; and won a principality by his gallant deeds. And, by this good sword,’ and he laid his hand upon the weighty one he wore, ‘I will win a crown to offer Bianca yet!’

“‘If gallantry and doughty deeds can win a crown, you certainly have a fair chance, Francesco Sforza,’ said the Count, in a kinder tone. ‘I am an old man,’ he continued, ‘and cannot expect to hold on much longer. I love a brave and enterprising character; but I certainly looked for a higher alliance for my daughter, than the leader of a Condottieri troop, even though that leader is Francesco Sforza. But fate will not be controlled. I am considered a stern, hard man; and many add the word miser to my titles. I like you. You have dared to dispute the will of a tyrant, to serve me; and I am not ungrateful. But before we speak further on this subject, let us reach our destination. I have a secret that has been confined to my breast these fourteen years. I will confide it to you. We shall then see how affairs will stand; but, depend upon it, your bold surprisal of the fortress of Pizzighitone will convulse the Duke with rage. You must either serve him, and place your troops in his pay, or evacuate his territories without delay. Now let us on.’

“The evening of the second day, the Count and Sforza reached the shores of Lago Maggiore, near the town of Arona. A small hamlet of fisherman was within half a league of them; and there they stopped in preference to entering Arona, which was a fortified place, and garri-

soned by the Duke's soldiers. A boat was soon procured; and the wind being favourable, the Count and his companion sailed, without attendants, for the Island of Fishers. It was scarcely more than two hours' sail; and just as the sun closed his labours for the day, they reached the Island. Francesco Sforza felt his heart beat with an almost painful violence as he leaped on the beach, followed more slowly and cautiously by the old Count. No human being was to be seen. The lofty tower rose grandly against the clear sky, in the fading light of evening; but no sound met the ear—all was still and tranquil, as if no living soul dwelt upon the Island. Francesco Sforza felt strangely; but he advanced with a quick step to the great gate of the tower: it was wide open: he called aloud: there was no return to his summons. The tower was totally deserted. No living being inhabited it."

"I have now," said Aleen, "arrived at a main point of the narrative, and will rest a little."

CHAPTER XXV.

AFTER a brief interval, Miss Atherstone resumed her story in these words—

"The Royal Palace of Milan, built by Azzo Visconti in the century preceding the events I have narrated, was a magnificent structure, of which little remains, if we except the Church of San Gotardo, which is included in the present Palazzo Imperiale as its chapel, and Azzo's tower, which still exists, a remarkably curious specimen of antiquity. Its construction is a mixture of Norman and Lombard, or the Cinque-cento style, one

truly national. On its summit is the statue of an angel in brass-gilt, of which a curious legend is told.

"One of the earlier artillerymen, called a bombardier, being condemned to death, proposed to knock off the head of the statue the first shot, if life would be spared; he did so, and purchased his life. Whether this story is true or not—at the period of our tale the statue was without a head. At the time Filippo-Maria ruled in Milan, this tower was used occasionally as a place of temporary confinement for petty offences by any of the officers of the court. Some of the chambers were large and lofty—and the upper ones enjoyed a most unrivalled view over the city, and the adjacent plains, to the not very distant range of Alps.

"In one of these chambers, rather richly furnished, was a youthful female captive, seated at the open window, and gazing out from its dizzy height upon the snow-clad summits of the Alps. It was now the latter end of August, and the weather was still hot and oppressive. The captive was Bianca de Ricci. As yet, her captivity was easily borne, as four days only had elapsed since her occupation of the chamber in Azzo's tower. Tears were in the beautiful eyes of the maiden, as she gazed over the wonderful extent of country before her. The garden of Italy was beneath—plains teeming with the luxuries of human life, and watered by magnificent rivers soon destined to be cut into numerous canals, so rapidly was the commerce of Milan increasing. Little thought the fair girl of the destiny that was before her; and though her meditations were fixed upon her absent lover, whom she scarcely expected ever to see again, little could she imagine that Francesco Sforza would hand down his name to posterity as the constructor of the first canal, called the Martesano, a canal that employed the genius of the great Leonardo da Vinci to complete. The hum of the busy population of Milan ascended to Bianca's ear, as she sat lonely and unthought-of amid thousands. The breeze, as it swept past, cooled her feverish cheek; and,

wearied and miserable, she gave way to the unhappiness that oppressed her.

"One morning, after the departure of her lover to liberate her father, Bianca was walking in the shady garden, at the back of the tower of Fishers, when Lucia came hurrying towards her, saying, in rather a flurried manner, that a long galley, full of armed men, was approaching the Island. From the stern floated a banner, which she at once recognized as the Ducal flag; she beheld several armed men, and one Signor richly attired, with a Spanish hat and rich plume.

"Extremely surprised, and beginning to dread, she knew not what, she watched the Signor as he landed, and walked up towards the great gate of the tower, unattended by any of the other persons in the vessel. In a few moments, Lucia entered the room, and, in an agitated manner, announced that the Count Cusani requested an audience.

"'Oh, Madonna!' added the poor girl, 'they are come to take you with them to Milan.'

Bianca grew pale, and her voice for a moment faltered, as she desired Lucia to show the Count Cusani to the saloon, whither, in a few minutes, having recovered her firmness, she proceeded. The Count Cusani was an elderly man, of prepossessing appearance. On the entrance of Bianca, he rose and advanced towards her, saluting her according to the custom of the times, and leading her to a seat.

"'It grieves me, lady,' said the Count, 'to be the bearer of unpleasant tidings. I am ordered by his Highness, the Duke, to conduct you with all due respect to Milan. You are to be lodged in the Ducal Palace.'

"'An honour, my lord,' returned Bianca, 'I by no means covet. Might I request to know, if in your power to say, the reason of so unexpected a mandate?'

"'One reason, fair lady,' answered the Count, mildly, 'is the Duke wishes to hold the daughter of the Count de Ricci in his power, as her father has been released from

captivity by the hands of the famous Condottieri leader, Francesco Sforza. And—'

" 'Ah, Heaven be praised !' interrupted Bianca, her eyes sparkling, and her hands clasped, ' my dear old father is no longer a prisoner. The noble Sforza has kept his word.'

"The Count de Cusani looked grave; but said, in a kindly tone—

" 'My dear young lady, our Duke is not exactly a person you can venture to trifle with. Whatever your sentiments may be, take an old courtier's advice; keep them to yourself when before his Highness. Will you now get ready as soon as possible? You may take a single female attendant with you, but no more. My orders are precise.'

"Bianca, quite aware that obedience was absolutely necessary, replied—

" 'I thank you sincerely, my lord, for your advice, and will be sure to follow it. I will not detain you long. In the meantime, be pleased to accept whatever refreshment my poor abode can afford.'

"The Count bowed; and Bianca, with a firm step, though beating heart, left the room.

"In less than an hour, the galley was under weigh for Cestio-Calendo, with Bianca, and her faithful Lucia, on board. The journey by land was performed in a close litter. Entering Milan, at night, Bianca was conveyed to Azzo's tower, and there confined to a suite of three chambers.

On the seventh day of her captivity, the door of her sitting chamber opened, and, without any previous announcement, a Signor, rather plainly attired, entered the room. Bianca at once surmised that her visitor was Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan. With a flushed cheek, and a beating heart, she rose from her chair, and stood for a moment scarcely knowing whether she ought to bend her knee to her sovereign prince, or let him imagine she knew not who he was. Before she had time to form

a resolution, the Duke, with a strange expression on his gloomy, but handsome, features, advanced close to Bianca, saying, in a rather agitated tone—

“‘Are *you* the Count de Ricci’s daughter?’

“‘My Lord Duke,’ replied Bianca, surprised at the manner and question of Filippo Maria, ‘I *am* the Count de Ricci’s daughter, and would gladly know what offence I have committed, to cause my being taken from my home and confined in this tower.’

“‘It’s a strange likeness!’ muttered the Duke in an abstracted manner. Throwing himself in a chair, he drew a gold-chain from his vest, to which was attached a miniature case, magnificently set with jewels. Touching a spring, the case opened; and then the Duke gazed intently on the picture within.

“‘Strange freak of nature!’ he muttered to himself. Then, looking up, he fixed his gaze upon the striking figure of Bianca de Ricci.

“‘Come hither, maiden?’ said the Duke. ‘Look on this portrait. Did you ever behold a countenance like that?’ And he held out the miniature to the astonished Bianca. With a timid step, she approached the Duke, and let her eyes rest on the miniature. The moment she did so, she started back with surprise; for, at the first glance, she actually thought she beheld herself. ‘Ha!’ ejaculated the Duke, ‘you see it. By the blessed saints! there is something more in this resemblance than a mere chance likeness! Say, how old are you, maiden?’

“‘Seventeen,’ returned Bianca, more and more surprised, and venturing to look the gloomy prince in the face, as he replaced the picture in his vest.

“‘Seventeen? good!’ muttered the Duke. And letting his eyes rest on the floor, he seemed to fall into a reverie.

“Filippo Maria was, at this period, about thirty-nine years of age. He was tall, large boned, and rather gaunt, with a high arched brow, and noble forehead. His dark penetrating eyes were almost hidden when his heavy brow

was lowered in thought. He wore no moustache; and his beard, black as jet, was short and peaked. Gloomy and suspicious by nature, cruel and remorseless in disposition, he yet, now and then, performed a good and generous act. When he succeeded to the Ducal throne, his dominion only included Milan and Pavia; but by treachery and deceit, together with the courage and abilities of the famous Francesco Carmagnola, he utterly rooted out the petty tyrants of Lombardy, and seized upon their possessions. Placenza, Lodi, Cremona, and Parma, all fell under his sway; and, at this period of his reign, his dominions were extensive, and his power great; but he had no children to inherit his sovereignty.

“When Count of Pavia, and while his elder brother, the ferocious Giovanni Maria, was Lord of Milan, Filippo became devotedly attached to the daughter of a wealthy citizen of Pavia, who returned his affection, unfortunately without knowing his name or rank. Too proud and ambitious to marry the fair daughter of a jeweller, he persuaded her to leave her home, and, after disclosing his name and rank, placed her in a castle he possessed near Banasco. He was passionately attached to the unfortunate girl, who died the second year of their union in giving birth to a daughter. Filippo Maria was distracted at his loss. At that time, the Count de Ricci was his bosom friend, and just married. He confided his daughter to the Count’s care, who took her to his castle on the Lago Maggiore. The death of the tyrant of Milan, some years after, convulsed the whole of Lombardy; and Filippo, though entirely devoted to his ambitious projects, received the news of his daughter’s death from the Count de Ricci, with a gloomy despondency, that for a time rendered him even more savage and remorseless than before. He now took a violent dislike to the Count; and, when Lord of Milan, by marrying the widow of his brother, and the sister of the Count de Ricci’s wife, in so hurried and indecent a haste, he so disgusted the Count that he quitted the court altogether; and being

a widower with an only daughter, fell into eccentric habits, living completely retired from the world.

"After this digression, let us return to Azzo's Tower, where we left the Duke and the Count's daughter. Filippo remained for some time in deep thought upon the past; while Bianca herself, struck by his questions, and some recollections of her own, remained in a painful state of suspense as to the result of her interview with the Duke. At length, Filippo Maria looked up, and the expression of his almost gloomy features was changed; he looked kindly, if not affectionately, at Bianca, saying, as he rose to his feet, and took her hand—

" 'Be of good heart, maiden. No harm will come to you here. But be not surprised if you lose one father to find another.' And without a word more the Duke left chamber, Bianca remaining bewildered, if not startled, by the strange words of the ruler of Milan.

"Filippo Maria had scarcely gained the ducal apartments, when one of his personal attendants, a nobleman of considerable influence and wealth, entered the saloon, saying—

" 'My Lord Duke, the very persons you were speaking of this morning, are actually at this moment in the palace, and request an audience of your Highness.'

" 'What!' exclaimed the Duke, with a fierce scowl, 'what! the traitor Sforza and the Count de Ricci. This audacity and insolence exceeds belief—I mean as respects this Condottieri leader's conduct, after daring to assault a state fortress, and release a prisoner I had particular reasons for retaining captive. Arrest them both, Marchese. We will teach this bold Condottiere a lesson he has not yet learnt.'

" 'Pardon me, your Highness,' returned the Marchese Rinaldo, 'if I venture to request you will restrain, for a time, your just resentment against Francesco Sforza. His troops, amounting to above four thousand men, adore their leader. Before your levies could possibly prevent them, this desperate and determined body of men would, in

revenge, ravage and lay waste the whole of Lombardy. Before entering the territory Francesco, as you know, made a rapid conquest of the March of Ancona and other territories. The Pope, I have heard, has confirmed him in his possession of the March, as a fief of the holy see; and it is even rumoured that Sforza intends to establish himself as an independent prince. His gendarmerie are accounted a most brilliant and powerful body of men. Better, my Lord Duke, see him; listen to what he has to say; if possible, secure him on your side in the struggle that is now going fiercely against your Highness. His joining your standard would crush your enemies at once.'

"Filippo Maria paused, thought a moment, and then said—

"'I was hasty. You are right; and your advice, Rinaldo, is good. I will receive these strange visitors in the Chamber of Audience in less than half an hour. Let our conference be strictly private.'

"All historians allow that Filippo Maria was gifted with consummate political sagacity. He clearly saw all the splendid opportunities which the convulsed state of Italy offered to his ambition; and all he seemed to want was the strong arm of a soldier of Fortune, like Sforza, on his side. He therefore determined to play a cautious and wily game with the young, but most brilliant leader of Condottieri then existing. As to the Count de Ricci, once his most attached friend and supporter, with him he had a different game to play. The old lord, he knew, had no ambition, but great wealth, and was possessed of some secrets, relating to his early career, that would be better buried in oblivion; and it is very probable, had not Sforza released him from captivity, he had ended his days a prisoner at Pizzighitone.

Francesco Sforza entered the saloon where the Duke sat waiting his arrival, with a stately and firm step. The Duke of Milan was no sovereign of his; he considered himself, since the decision of the Pope, an independent prince. He, therefore, neither bent his knee, nor offered

any other token of respect to Filippo Maria, than to his equal in rank, With the Count de Ricci, who entered the saloon with Sforza, the case was different. He acknowledged the Duke as his Sovereign Prince, and treated him as such. No one of the Duke's household was present, except the Marchese Rinaldo.

"'My Lord Duke,' said Francesco Sforza, in a firm, clear voice, 'I have requested an audience of your Highness as an envoy of Venice, in the first place, and for personal reasons, in the second.'

"'As an envoy of Venice, my Lord,' said the Duke, interrupting him, 'we will give you an audience in due form to-morrow; for I knew not you visited my Court in such a capacity. But whatever personal reasons you may have for requesting this interview, I will now willingly hear them.'

"'Well, then, my Lord Duke,' rejoined Sforza, 'I will state them. The last time I visited the dominions of your Highness, my life was attempted by assassins. I was visiting an old comrade, and was forced to seek safety on an island in Lago Maggiore, where I was pursued; and, my weapon breaking, I was run through the body and left for dead upon the beach. And, certainly, but for the generous assistance of the Count de Ricci's daughter, who prevented the assassins from making quite sure of their work, I should have been slain. As it was, to her care of my wound, I owe my life.'

"'Well, my lord,' hastily interrupted the Duke, his features betraying considerable agitation, while Francesco Sforza spoke,—'well, what have I to do with that affair? Do you know who the assassins were? If so, point them out, and they shall meet the doom they merit.'

"'No, my Lord Duke,' returned Sforza calmly, and fixing his gaze upon the ruler of Milan, 'I do not know who the assassins were. Of them, or their attempt, I care little. Nay, I owe them much; and readily forgive them the sufferings they caused me for the blessing their villany bestowed upon me. To the Count de Ricci's daughter I

owe my life. I have devoted mine to her ; and, with her father's full consent—'

"A strange, mocking smile passed over the features of the Duke, as, raising his head, he said—

"‘Stop, my lord ; one word to this Count De Ricci before you utter another syllable.’ Sforza’s cheek flushed, and he turned and looked anxiously into the stern, unmoved features of the old Count. ‘Count De Ricci,’ pursued the Duke, fixing his dark eyes, with a bitter expression in their glance, on his subject, ‘you have deceived me. You have deprived me for years of a daughter’s love. You stated she died ; whereas your own and only child, also named Bianca, perished—not Bianca Visconti. What say you to this accusation Count De Ricci?’

"‘I say, your Highness,’ returned the old Count, ‘that you would not make this assertion without a good foundation. As you carried off old Dame Gertrude, I suppose you gained the knowledge you possess from her.’

"‘The torture wrung it from her, my lord,’ returned the Duke fiercely. ‘There was no mistaking the striking likeness the girl bore to her mother. Suspicion being once roused, I sought for confirmation of my thoughts. And now, Count, what punishment think you a man deserves who dared to act as you have done ? What motive had you in thus robbing the father of his child ?’

"The old warrior remained quite unmoved : he showed no symptoms of fear at the Duke’s fierce looks or words, but replied with perfect calmness, while Sforza stood, with folded arms, gazing in intense anxiety from one to the other, and waiting the result of a most unexpected discovery.

"‘My Lord Duke,’ said the Count, ‘I never intended to rob you of your child, for I acknowledge her to be your daughter. You may remember when the pestilence raged in Lombardy, and your Grace’s child and mine were seized with it, you sent your own physician to administer to their fearful distemper. He was a timid

man, and when he beheld half my household dead from the plague, and the two poor children senseless and livid as the dead, he said—There is nothing more to be done here—they are dead. And he left in haste, carrying the pest with him, of which he perished. Alas! my child died that night. But my Countess, who loved the children as her life, insisted there were signs of life in Bianca Visconti, and devoted herself day and night to her recovery. The physician informed your Highness that your child was dead. My wife restored her to life, and sacrificed her own in doing so. I resolved then to keep the girl as my own, and leave her all my possessions. As she grew in years, I loved her as my own; and I considered her destiny might be much happier, as the acknowledged daughter of the Count de Ricci, than even as Bianca Visconti. But your Highness having no children, and Bianca bestowing her troth upon the Count Francesco Sforza, whose life she saved—and he plighting his in return—altered my mind on the subject. I informed Sforza, whose child Bianca was, and he at once resolved to come here, without waiting for his credentials as a Venetian envoy, and lay his proposals before your Highness, trusting, when you heard them, that you would accept him for a son-in-law.’

“‘What!’ exclaimed the Duke, with a low laugh of scorn; ‘bestow the daughter of a Visconti upon the son of a peasant, even though he be Lord of Ancona, and Count and Suzerain of some important fiefs in the kingdom of Naples.’

“‘Take care, my Lord Duke,’ interrupted Sforza, with a fierce look at the ruler of Milan, ‘that the peasant’s son—’

“‘Nay, nay, Francesco Sforza,’ hastily interrupted the old Count de Ricci, laying his hand upon the extended and powerful arm of the Condottieri leader, ‘nay, nay, keep your temper—my Lord Duke will hear what you have to propose before he destroys his daughter’s happiness, and turns a willing follower into a bitter enemy.’

"While the old Count spoke, Rinaldo, Marchese de Bracciolini, whispered some few words in the ear of the Duke, who for a moment, giving way to his gloomy and passionate temper, was on the point of crushing his own political designs. Mastering his temper, he turned to Sforza, saying :

" 'You expect to receive the hand of Bianca Visconti. What do you propose to do to gain so great a prize ?'

" 'Relieve you, my Lord Duke,' said Sforza, boldly, 'from the persecution you are now enduring from your own generals. Abandon the siege of Martagnano, and I will engage to conclude a peace with all the opposing states, advantageous to your highness, and thus conclude the war. Moreover, from this time forth I will enter your Grace's service with all the forces I command.'

" 'If,' said the Duke eagerly, 'you undertake to conclude a peace advantageous to my dukedom, and do so at once, I, on my part, will agree to give you my daughter Bianca, and for her dowry, Cremona and its territory.* As to you, Count de Ricci, I pardon you, leaving you your territories ; stipulating, however, that you bequeath them, as you have no successor, to her you so long considered your daughter.'

" Francesco Sforza stepped forward, and, bending his knee, with delight beaming on his handsome features, kissed the Duke's hand, doing him homage as his lord and sovereign.

" Thus Francesco Sforza gained the first step to the throne he was so shortly destined to mount. So successfully did he manage his negotiations, that a treaty of peace was eagerly signed by all the belligerents, who were heartily sick of the war. On the restoration of tranquillity, he received the hand of the happy Bianca Visconti, who not only brought him youth, beauty, and amiability, but the rich dowry of Cremona and its territories.

* Historical fact.

"The future history of this most successful Condottieri leader is too well known for me to touch upon. Suffice it to say, that on the death of Filippo-Maria, he forced the Milanese to open their gates to him, and finally to select him as their duke and ruler. Thus the son of the peasant of Castignola won a crown for his descendants.

"At the death of the old Count de Ricci, who continued to reside at his castle near Bavino, his possessions passed into the hands of Duke Sforza; who, to commemorate his happy meeting with his beloved Bianca, built a splendid palace on the Island of Fishers, where he often retired to spend a few weeks in the summer months. The old tower was dear to them both, for there their loves commenced. A painting, commemorating the event, representing Sforza's attempted assassination, and Bianca hastening to his rescue, was painted by the great Leonardo da Vinci. This picture, the Count de Ricci informed us, was preserved by his ancestors till, in a sudden popular commotion, the palace built by Duke Sforza was burned to the ground. The tower we first sheltered in on the island still stands, though much dilapidated, and is, as I mentioned, known as Sforza's Tower.

"Thus, my dear sir," said Aleen to Mr. Fitzpatrick, "ends my legend, which, like your own, is founded no doubt on some historical facts. It, however, induced me to read certain chronicles of the renowned Duke Sforza; whom all historians agree in making a famous captain and knight, though some, indeed, say he gained his crown by an act of perfidy."

"My dear Miss Atherstone," returned Mr. Fitzpatrick, "I am so charmed with your legend, though it has no fairies in it, that I will take the first opportunity of looking into a history of that period of Italian annals, which I know is full of most romantic facts. But yonder is the termination of our voyage," continued Mr. Fitzpatrick. "There is Bally Castle. I trust, my dear ladies, you will like it, and the scenery surrounding it."

"A more lovely spot cannot be," said Mrs. Atherstone

and her daughter, with real pleasure beaming in the bright eyes of Aleen. "But what is the name of that stupendous mountain to the left?"

"That," said Mr. Fitzpatrick, "is The Keeper; and that to the right is Inchigum. The first is nearly 3,400 feet high. Amid those hills is the celebrated Devil's Bite—a great gap said to be made by his Satanic Majesty mistaking the ridge of of the mountain for a fat pig!"

Aleen laughed; and just then the barge shot up to a quay, on which stood a handsome boat-house. Several attendants were ready to assist.

Here we must leave our heroine for a time; and, in our next chapter, visit England.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN a richly-furnished chamber, in a large and handsome house—whose gardens, in the rear, extended to the edge of the river Thames, though situated in the heart of London—sat Mr. O'Grady and his son, William Granville O'Grady.

The banks of the river Thames in Queen Anne's reign, and in that of George the First, were not so thickly built over with vast warehouses as at present. Many mansions, in the vicinity of the Strand, possessed handsome gardens, extending to the water's edge. The house inhabited by Mr. O'Grady belonged to a rich grocer and soap-boiler, and was let to Mr. O'Grady, at a high rent for that period.

It was past ten o'clock, and supper had just been removed. Several decanters and flasks of wine and spirits were placed upon the table. It was an age when all men, high and low, drank hard.

The month was March, and a remarkably cold March it was—even for England. A wood fire, placed, after the fashion of France, on two iron supporters, with handsome casts of a dragon's body at their extremities, blazed cheerfully. Mr. O'Grady and his son evidently expected guests that night, for both were dressed with care, and in all the elaborate ugliness of the times.

Father and son were conversing earnestly; and their countenances were somewhat flushed, as if they had been making free with the juice of the grape before the supper was removed.

"You are sure, William," said the father, "that the duke left this morning."

"Positive," returned the son.

"It looks, then, as if this intelligence from France is not to be doubted," returned Mr. O'Grady.

"You may be satisfied. My informant is not to be doubted," replied the son. "He saw the fleet lying to off Mardyke; and, during the late severe gale, Sir John Leake and Lord Dursley were forced to abandon the blockade; without a doubt, the Chevalier St. George has at once set sail for Scotland."

"This will be cheering news for our guests to-night," said Mr. O'Grady.

"By the mass, father," returned the son, with a forced laugh, "I think you and your Jacobite friends are working hard in a losing cause. I wish to heaven you would give up this bootless enterprise. This Chevalier St. George will never gain the crown he aims at. We could accomplish our ends without risking our necks to the halter, or our heads to the block. You have been, half your life, lopping at the branches, when you could have put your axe to the roots."

Mr. O'Grady looked angrily at his son as he replied—

"It is you, William, that have wavered—not me. And you now give me sorry thanks for the years I have laboured to raise you to rank and fortune. I should have succeeded from the very outset, had not that

stumbling-block to our path been born afterwards. If the rascals had fired the mansion, none of these obstacles that have now occurred could have arisen."

The son gazed at his father with a strange expression of disgust on his handsome features, as if he loathed the idea. His sire did not look up; but the son said—

"I must confess I somehow do not like this wholesale way of proceeding. It is certainly too bad to have this fine property—which was once in our possession, and to which I really feel I have a right—snatched from us without a struggle to get it back. Still, I do not feel quite inclined to proceed to the extremity you propose. Now with respect to this offer of Ulick O'Connor's, depend on it, it is now at an end. Sir William O'Grady, the possessor of the estates, and the William O'Grady existing at present, are two very distinct personages. Ulick O'Connor has embarked with the Chevalier St. George, and will land his train. It's all a mad scheme."

"I know very well, William," returned Mr. O'Grady moodily, "that you care little about the success of the Jacobite cause; but I can tell you, if this expedition prospers—and I see every reason that it should—it will raise us to wealth and rank. The confiscated property of the Fitzmaurices would come to you."

"Well, I hope it may, father," rejoined the son; "but, nevertheless, I feel very satisfied that I can still command The Warhawk. She made a splendid voyage the other day in her schooner rig; and I have a scheme in my head with respect to this damsel, Aleen O'Connor, as Ulick persists in calling her. I will make sure of her, willing or unwilling. She's a splendid girl; and her fortune will be princely. Ha! here come some of your Jacobite friends. Take care, father, take care! These Hanover rats have a keen scent. I'm off to-morrow."

As he spoke, four gentlemen entered the room. But as we have nothing to do with the conspiracy then on foot to overthrow George the First's throne, or with any of the conspirators, save Ulick O'Connor and Mr.

O'Grady, we will pass over the conference between them, which occupied most part of the night; and merely say, that by twelve o'clock next day, not one of the party remained in London.

We must here relate the events that led to the connection of the O'Grady family with the Granvilles and Fitzmaurices. At the period of Oliver Cromwell's cruel oppression and brutal outrages upon the unfortunate Irish chieftains who opposed his arms in Ireland, the O'Gradys were a numerous and influential family. Like many others, however, they were crushed and impoverished, and some years before the opening of our story, only two orphan brothers survived of the Kerry O'Gradys. Without home, property, or influential kindred, the two boys were reared in a wild and neglected state, in a poor county town in Kerry, by a very distant kinsman on the mother's side. The eldest was about thirteen at his father's death, the youngest eleven.

The eldest was a remarkably handsome boy; but, from his very earliest years, manifested a wild and vicious nature. The youngest appeared of a timid, vacillating character and disposition. Their education was sadly neglected; for their protector, himself a bachelor, was so reduced in character and circumstances, as to subsist entirely by a secret connection with a then notorious gang of smugglers. At fourteen years of age, William O'Grady, the elder, sailed in a smuggling lugger for the coast of Spain. On the vessel's departure from that country, the boy, by some mischance, was left behind; and being of a roving, reckless disposition, he joined a band of Zingarees and roamed through Spain for nearly two years. He next joined a troop of insurgents, and being taken prisoner, would have been shot, had not his youth and handsome figure attracted the attention of Don Jose Maldonados, the officer who routed the insurgents and took O'Grady prisoner. Don Jose listened to O'Grady's account of himself with great surprise; for he represented himself to be a member of a noble Irish

family driven from his home by the heretical English. He added that he had escaped to Spain in a vessel bound there, and that, to avoid starvation, he had been induced to join the insurgents, of whose intentions he was ignorant.

Don Jose took him under his protection ; and, naturally daring and clever, he soon induced his patron to give him a commission in his own regiment. In three years, he rose to the rank of captain, and acquired a tolerable knowledge of military tactics, and a double proportion of vice and profligacy. On the death of Don Jose, who was killed in battle, William O'Grady left the regiment, and proceeded to Seville, having a good sum of money left him by his really generous protector. Being a determined gambler, he soon entered into the dissipated society of that city ; but getting into scrapes, he resolved to go and try his fortunes in his own country. In the tall, deeply-embrowned and soldier-like looking man, no one was likely to recognize the wild and reckless boy, who, eight years previously, had sailed from his native land with a gang of smugglers.

Assuming another name as soon as he landed at the Cove of Cork, he proceeded into Kerry, and then to the little town of Skibbereen, where he had left his brother with his mother's kinsman. As he justly conjectured, no one recognized him ; so taking up his abode in the little inn, he made cautious enquiries concerning his brother, and the distant relative with whom he had been left. The letter, he learned, was dead. His brother, five years back, had gone in a small smack to Bristol, and no one had heard anything of him from that time.

The troubled and lawless state of Ireland at this period offered to William O'Grady a wide field to try his fortunes in. Various causes led to his intimacy with the turbulent Ulick O'Connor, and he joined him in his wild projects of exterminating the English settlers. Under the name of Fenwick, William O'Grady joined several of the secret societies then existing against the

government. At the same time, he openly assumed the title of an officer in the Spanish army; and, in Cork, frequented the best society. His handsome person, and insinuating manners, won the affection of Sir Vrance Granville's daughter; and finally, he, in an evil hour, induced her to fly with him; for, as to gaining her father's consent, he knew that was utterly impossible. Fortunately for her, she died in giving birth to a son; and William O'Grady, knowing how hopeless any endeavour would be to bring about a reconciliation with the Granville family, returned to Ireland, and again joined Ulick O'Connor, then outlawed. Under the name of Fenwick, O'Grady became the leader of a notorious band of desperadoes, who committed the most frightful excesses in the counties of Cork and Kerry, the remote districts of which latter were the favourite retreats of Fenwick and his associates.

It happened that, during a gale, a Dutch galliote was driven on the rocks near Dunkestore; and, her unfortunate crew being drowned, she beat over the rocks, and stranded on the beach. Some of Fenwick's men took possession of her. It was at this period he planned his attack upon Castle Granville. Ulick O'Connor was not at all aware of the private schemes and projects of his daring and reckless associate, as he was shortly after forced to fly the country. Fenwick, amongst his followers, possessed one, named Dennis Mahony, who was perfectly devoted to him: it was this man who married Brady Sullivan, a scheming, artful, and clever woman. She returned, as a spy, to Castle Granville, and contrived to get the nursing, as already mentioned, of the young Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. Thus O'Grady, or Fenwick, as he styled himself, became acquainted with all the proceedings of the families of Granville and Fitzmaurice.

Besides the project of making his son next heir to the Granville property, O'Grady nourished an intense hatred to the old Baronet, Sir Vrance Granville. After much thought and change of projects, he, at last, planned the

expedition against Castle Granville. The Dutch galliote was repaired ; and, embarking with sixty of his most reckless associates, eager for the plunder of Castle Granville, they succeeded, as our readers are aware, in their diabolical and murderous attack. Brady Sullivan, as she was called, carried off young Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, and, with him, was taken on board the Dutch galliote.

But O'Grady himself, and a few followers, in their hurry and confusion, and the extreme darkness of the night, missed the boats. The alarm having reached the peasantry in the vicinity, he was forced to cross the country, and hide himself in one of his retreats for several weeks, cursing the stupidity of his followers for not setting fire to the castle. In the meantime, those who succeeded in regaining the galliote got under weigh ; but the violent gale that blew that night, and the intoxication of the whole crew, rendered their voyage back to the creeks in the vicinity of Cape Clear one of peril and difficulty. In a few hours, after getting under weigh, the vessel struck upon one of the numerous reefs off the coast ; and, in the confusion and dismay, several of the crew lost their lives. Mahony, however, contrived to save his wife's life, without bestowing a thought upon the unfortunate child, who was left to perish ; and when, next morning, not a vestige of the Dutch galliote was to be seen, she was supposed to have beat over the reef, and gone down in deep water.

But providence ordered it otherwise. With the rise of the tide, the Dutch sloop beat over the reef ; and, a strong gale springing up from the land, drove her out to sea, leaky, dismasted, and much shattered ; yet able to keep the sea for four-and-twenty hours. She was then boarded, as related, by old Jack Morris, and the young Cuthbert Fitzmaurice was saved.

When William O'Grady heard that the galliote perished, and the child with it, he felt exceedingly pleased. The heir was thus removed, and further plotting was unnecessary. Some time after this, the desperate bands of different denominations that infested the South of

Ireland, were put down by the vigorous measures of government. Every effort was made to secure the person of Fenwick, but he evaded all pursuit. O'Connor was in France, in the French service, and, shortly after, O'Grady contrived to escape over to Portugal, with his son.

After some years spent there, allowing time for the name of Fenwick to be forgotten, he began to think of returning to Ireland to renew his project against the Granville family. Having heard that the Fitzmaurice estates were confiscated, and meeting some of his old associates in Lisbon, then engaged in the contraband trade, he joined them in building a smuggling lugger of a superior class and description. At this period he possessed a considerable sum of money—gained by great success in gambling transactions.

On arriving in Ireland, having disguised his person as much as possible, he took up his abode in a house, adjoining the old tower of Kilgobbin, on the Bandon river. There, with the assistance of his old allies, Brady Mahony and her husband, he planned the introduction of his son William to Sir Hugh Granville, as the lost Cuthbert Fitzmaurice. The impatient temper of his son, who detested the constraint he suffered during his abode at Castle Granville, and the suspicions entertained by Dennis O'Regan, concerning the false Cuthbert, induced him to abandon that plan.

Still, no failure or disappointment could discourage him from persevering and following up his determination of succeeding, by some means or other. No matter at what risk, he would persist till his son William inherited the property he considered him entitled to.

He had the most accurate information of everything that occurred at Castle Granville. When Sir Hugh returned from India, William O'Grady still continued to keep up the deception, till, by listening at the door to the communication made by O'Regan to the Baronet, he learned that he was discovered; and, not choosing to face the Baronet, the son fled to the father.

This unexpected dencœment enraged and puzzled the elder O'Grady; for a time he was uncertain how to act. Still there was no necessity for flight; for, though Cuthbert was suspected as an imposter, O'Grady himself was still totally free from discovery. Some short time after this, Mr. O'Grady, disguised, was in Cork; and, passing the door of an hotel, he was struck with astonishment on beholding a person enter the house, whom he never expected to see again in this world. Observing a waiter speak to the stranger as he passed in, O'Grady inquired the name of the gentleman.

"That gentleman in black, in the spectacles?" inquired the waiter.

"Yes," returned O'Grady, anxiously.

"Oh, sir, that was Mr. Gardener. He is Sir Hugh Granville's private secretary.

"Ha, I thought so," said Mr. O'Grady, joyfully. "I knew him at once." And giving the waiter a couple of pieces of silver, he added—"Mr. Gardener is a very old friend of mine. Show me into his room."

"Certainly, sir," said the waiter. "This way."

The next morning he threw open a door, and Mr. O'Grady entered the room, and beheld the stranger seated at a table, writing a letter. The Baronet's secretary raised his eyes from the paper, and looked into the great whiskered and moustachioed face of Mr. O'Grady, simply saying—

"Pray, sir, to what do I owe the pleasure of your company?"

The waiter having retired and closed the door, Mr. O'Grady advanced close to the table, and passing his hand across his face, he removed his moustachios, saying—

"Is it possible, Terence O'Grady, you forget your only brother?"

Mr. Gardener fell back in his chair, pale as death at the word Terence. But when the sentence was finished, as if relieved from a great weight, he sprang on his feet,

and embraced his brother with a real feeling of affection and astonishment.

"Good God, William!" exclaimed he, "I did not know you in the least."

"Ah, I am not surprised at that, Terence," returned Mr. O'Grady, coolly restoring to his lip his false moustachios, and sitting down beside his brother.

"You were very young when we parted; but I could not mistake *you*. So you are actually secretary to Sir Hugh Granville—the very man who, by a special and royal grant, has robbed my son of his undoubted rights."

Mr. Gardener, as we shall continue to call him, to avoid confusion of names, looked at his brother with a most perplexed gaze. But Mr. O'Grady's head was full of the most extraordinary wild schemes. Strange that this man should prefer, in pursuit of his views, to traverse so crime-stained a path, when he must have known in his heart, that had he candidly and openly declared that the false Cuthbert was Sir Hugh's own lawful nephew—the only child of his eldest sister—the generous and upright Baronet would unquestionably have settled a handsome inheritance upon the young man. No; the heart and soul of O'Grady was essentially bad and vicious. He would grasp at the whole, and steep his soul in guilt to gain his perverted ends.

Thus, then, after years of separation, the brothers met; and it now became Mr. O'Grady's object to contrive that his brother's situation in the family of Sir Hugh should be of infinite benefit to himself and his plans.

We have said that, when a child, Terence O'Grady was of an extremely weak and changeable nature. He was easily led; and, in consequence of his neglected childhood, he had, from his earliest years, witnessed every kind of profligacy and trickery, defiance of the laws, and savage propensities. At this period of his life, under proper guidance, he might, probably, have turned out an honest man; but, becoming familiar with so much depravity, his inclination led him to follow an evil course.

To get rid of such a youth, his relative, finding he made no scruple of deceiving him, sent him to Bristol to an Irish storedealer there, that he might learn a trade. Terence thus acquired a tolerable knowledge of book-keeping, and then became a clerk in a merchant's counting-house. Being naturally docile, he progressed rapidly, but soon got into bad company; and being detected, or suspected, of committing some frauds against his employers, was dismissed. He then proceeded to London, and being really an excellent accountant, and writing a beautiful hand, he soon procured a situation: for his exterior was good, and his countenance rather handsome than otherwise. In a few years, he worked himself into a very lucrative establishment, and might have realised a handsome independence but for his love of pleasure and evil company.

In a fatal hour he married a most unprincipled woman—handsome and extravagant. She induced him to commit a forgery for a large sum, with the greater part of which she decamped with an abandoned associate. Exasperated and maddened at this desertion, and dreading discovery, as the time approached when the forged document would be presented to his employers, Terence O'Grady fled; and, going to Liverpool, managed to get a passage in a fine ship bound for Calcutta, determined to turn over a new leaf, and shun evil compauy.

On board this ship was a gentleman going out to India to fill a lucrative situation under the Government. During the passage, his secretary died of a fever. With a little management, and having an extremely good address, Terence O'Grady, under the name of Gardener, offered his services for the time to the gentleman, whose name was Hamilton, and who was eventually so much pleased with his new secretary's writing and unassuming manner during the voyage, that, on arriving at Calcutta, he offered to continue him in the situation he had temporarily filled. This offer Mr. Gardener gladly accepted, and vowed he would honestly fulfil his duties. And he did so for three or four years, when unfortunately he lost his kind patron.

Just at this period, Sir Hugh Granville arrived at Madras; and the Baronet making inquiries for a secretary to put together some intricate papers, Mr. Gardener applied and was engaged. Sir Hugh Granville, like Mr. Hamilton, was so highly pleased with his services, that he offered to retain him with a handsome salary and a pension at his death, if he would accompany him to Europe. To this Mr. Gardener gladly accepted, for the climate was beginning to destroy his constitution. In the lapse of years in Ireland, and under another name, he had no fear of being discovered, and therefore sailed for Europe with Sir Hugh. Terence was amazed when he learned from his brother his history; and that his nephew, William O'Grady, was actually the next heir to the great Granville estates, provided Sir Hugh died without a will.

After this first meeting, the brothers frequently had conferences. But it is needless to repeat all the arguments used by William O'Grady to induce his brother to enter into his plans to secure to his son the inheritance of the Granvilles. Hitherto, Terence had kept his word: he had acted fairly and honestly to his two last patrons; and it required considerable time, and most plausible arguments, to gain him over to his brother's views. Having seen the certificates of marriage and the birth of his brother's child, Terence considered his nephew lawfully entitled to the Granville estates—though he knew they might be willed away from him. Everything, therefore, depended on the suppression of a will. Besides, in the event of success, he, Terence, was to receive a thousand a-year during his life. This, certainly, had some weight with him in his determination to help his brother. Sir Vrance Granville was the first baronet created in Ireland. His son, Sir Hugh, for his services abroad—and having no heirs of his own body—obtained the power from the Crown of willing his title, and his family estates, to his nephew, Gerald. The object, then, was to secure the will. Terence was aware that Sir Hugh had made one in favour of his beloved, and, as he supposed, only nephew.

This would have been scarcely possible had not the Baronet—on his return to Castle Granville, with his secretary, to make some arrangements with respect to property—been employed at the very time of his death in arranging some valuable papers in a singularly constructed cabinet, secured by a most ingenious lock—incapable of being imitated or forced. Sir Hugh, that fatal morning, had unlocked his cabinet. Mr. Gardener was sitting at the table, marking and taking memoranda, when a low moan, from the Baronet, fell upon his ear. He turned hastily round; and at that identical moment, the Baronet fell upon the floor, struck with apoplexy. The first impulse of Terence O'Grady was to give the alarm. His hand was on the bell: he paused. Deadly pale, with anxiety and terror, he gazed alternately upon the senseless Baronet and the open cabinet. The study was in a remote wing of the castle; the cabinet was let into the wall, and the lid was of brass. It stood wide open, and a single glance showed him the will. Stooping, he lifted the head of his generous patron, and he felt his pulse. It had ceased. He laid his hand on his heart: it was silent. The noble and upright Sir Hugh Granville was dead.

Terence O'Grady stepped to the cabinet, and seized, with a somewhat trembling hand, the important will. Placing it in a secure spot, apart from the library, for it was too large to conceal about his person. He then locked the cabinet; took Sir Hugh's bunch of keys; opened a private desk, and placed the key of the cabinet therein; and then returned the keys to the Baronet's pocket. He now rang the bell with violence, rushing at the same time from the library, and shouting loudly for assistance.

The deed was done. Mr. Briefless was summoned; but Mr. Gardener escaped all suspicion. There could appear no possible motive to allow even a thought of wrong to rest on Mr. Gardener; for Mr. Briefless knew that in the will the secretary was left two hundred pounds a-year for life; and the loss of the will deprived

him of that legacy. Not, indeed, that Mr. Briefless, even for an instant, mixed up Mr. Gardener's name with the loss of the will; though the worthy lawyer could not be convinced but that the will had, in some manner or other, been made away with.

After Sir Hugh's death, Mr. Gardener, having received much kindness from Mr. Briefless, and a promise that his intended legacy would yet be made good by Gerald Granville, said he would, for the benefit of his health, cross the Channel, and reside for a time in Devonshire.

From motives of his own, Terence deceived his brother William by declaring he had burnt Sir Hugh's will, while he retained it in his own possession. It was shortly after this that he underwent his first attack of epilepsy. He had been, from childhood, of a feeble constitution; his mind was never very strong, and he was always prone to superstition. Being now fearfully shattered, his past life rose before him in terrible distinctness; and the fearful convulsions he underwent during his attack, left him weak and broken in mind and body. Two succeeding attacks so completely altered him in feature, that even his brother would have doubted his identity. Horrid dreams haunted him at night: prostration of mind perplexed him during the day; and nervous anxiety and fear of the coming of darkness, made life a perfect misery.

Conscience, at length, so worked upon him, that, getting a longer interval of ease, and firmly believing that the fearful disease he laboured under was a judgment of God, he determined to undo, as far as lay in his power, the evil he had committed. Therefore, taking Sir Hugh's will with him, he reached Cork, and, as the reader already knows, was stricken dead in the very act of restitution.

We have been as brief as possible in winding up and elucidating those events of the story which may appear in any way mysterious; and shall now follow the details

of our narrative to the end without being arrested in our course by retrograde movements.

CHAPTER XXVII.

To the westward of the Islands of Cape Clear, lie several most extraordinary deep inlets of the sea running several miles in various directions into the interior of a very wild, and, at the period of our tale, very deserted ill-cultivated country, scattered over with a poor and somewhat lawless race of inhabitants. All this country now wears a very different aspect; populous villages and towns are seen where not a hut existed in the reigns of Queen Anne and George the First. Many a goodly cutter and schooner sailed from those creeks for various parts of the United Kingdom; while in Anne's reign their sole living occupants were enormous flocks of wild fowl, and an occasional smuggling craft and its crew, hiding behind the numerous islands, which to a casual observer, block up their mouths. Some of these creeks can boast of much natural beauty of scenery; others are bare banks of mud. Some are stern and grand, from the precipices and masses of huge rocks that hem in their silent and tranquil waters.

One bright morning in the early part of September, the sun had just raised its head from its ocean bed, and its rays fell over the still waters of a most romantic creek, about six miles to the westward of Cape Clear. This creek was not half a mile broad in any part; but the water was singularly deep, and the cliffs high and perpendicular. Not a breath of wind fell upon the water; for several bold and singularly-shaped islands

shut up the entrance from the sea; so that the space within looked like a circular lake excluded from all communication with the outward world. In the middle of this water lay a long, low, graceful craft, with its tall tapering spars towering high above the bank, and with scarcely to the eyes a shroud to support them. This vessel was *The Warhawk*, then the sole property of William O'Grady. During the short period that he enjoyed the rank and wealth of the Granville family, he had purchased all the shares of the several owners of this celebrated smuggling lugger, which, as yet, had defied all attempts either to capture, or condemn her. He then used her as his yacht.

Though she had never been caught with a contraband article on board, she was notoriously known as the most successful smuggling lugger that ever ran a cargo to the coast of Ireland. William O'Grady did not join in any of the political schemes of his plotting father: he had no taste for them whatever; and, with more foresight than his designing sire, during the short period of his prosperity he put aside some large sums, in case of an emergency. When deprived of his ill-gotten title and estates, William O'Grady consoled himself with the reflection that he still possessed the *Warhawk* and several thousand pounds; and once more he gathered about him many of his old associates, determined, if he failed in the projects he then had in view, that *The Warhawk* should return to her old trade.

On the morning indicated at the opening of this chapter, the lugger was lying at single anchor in the pool, at the back of Clare Island. As soon as the sun's rays fell upon the flush deck, the crew, which then consisted of only fourteen seamen, were roused from their slumbers, and all on board became actively engaged in getting under weigh. In the midst of the bustle, William O'Grady came upon deck. The anchor was up; but no sails were hoisted, and the tide was at the full, without motion either way.

"You must sweep her out, Mahony," said William O'Grady to his follower, who is known to our readers as Brady Sullivan's husband, and the *ci-devant* Phelim O'Toole.

"We shall have a breeze," said Dennis Mahony, "after we pass Enniskerkin Island. The tide is on the turn, and anything will set her out through the Gut."

Accordingly, four immense sweeps were run out; and, the ebbmaking, the Warhawk, with great ease, was kept moving through the narrow channel between the three Islands that blocked up the mouth of this singular creek.

"Did Tendersink's sloop get into Baltimore last night?" demanded William O'Grady of Mahony, who was steering the lugger.

"Faix, the Dutchman did it well," replied Mahony. "He got part of his cargo safe stowed away in the caverns, and then sailed into Baltimore with a cargo of stockfish, salt cod, and sour Dutch cheeses. He's a beauty, is Tendersink. I staid with him till late last night."

"Did he see," inquired William O'Grady, "anything of this fast brig—now on this coast, and commanded by the very same man that had the cutter, that chased us to the old head? Captain Morris—that's his name, is it not?"

"Faix, that's the man," answered Mahony; "he's a commander now, and the ten-gun brig he has is said to be the fastest ever seen on this coast. But, be gorra! we shall care little for her should she have a run after us."

"But did Tendersink see her?"

"No, sir, he didn't. He said she was at Bantry, or in Kenmare Bay. There's a nice breeze from the eastward, sir," continued Mahony, as the lugger shot out from the shelter of the island, and stood towards the large one of Enniskerkin, some sunken rocks preventing her attempting to go through the other channel, which was much shorter.

"Well, get in the sweeps, and up with our fore-lug. If we get a good breeze from the eastward, we can reach our destination to-night," said William O'Grady, taking the tiller himself.

The immense sheet of canvas forming the fore-lug was soon up, and filled with the rising breeze; and then the mizen. Rapidly threading her way through the intricacies of a really dangerous channel of sunken rocks, the Warhawk soon gained the open sea without the Island of Enniskerkin; and then hoisting her main-lug, stood away for the Mizen Head.

"She goes along, sir," observed Mahony, "better than ever, since you shifted the foremast a foot."

"I think she does, Dennis; but I have something to say to you about this Captain Morris, who commands this ten-gun brig. I heard some strange tale of him in a club-room in London some months ago, about the time he received his rank of commander."

"Faix, I wanted myself to say something about him," returned Mahony; "but what did you hear, sir?"

"Why, I was one evening engaged at a card-table in a club-room, and a gentleman standing by said to another, in my hearing—'Oh, yes, that's the officer who, when a lad, picked up the body of the unfortunate and gallant Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel, who was wrecked, you know, on the Scilly Islands.' 'Oh, I remember,' returned the other gentleman, who was a naval officer, and an old man; 'I was on board Parker's brig when she went to St. Mary's to bring the body away. That lad's history was curious enough. They told us he was picked up in a Dutch galliote off the Islands, quite a wreck; and all they could make out of the child was, that his name was Cuthbert.' When I heard that name," continued William O'Grady, "coupled with that of a Dutch galliote, I was struck forcibly; so much so, that I played a wrong card and lost my game, and a hundred guineas at the same time. While I was apologizing to my partner, the two gentlemen moved on, and I heard no more. But I remem-

ber my father and you speaking of a Dutch galliote, and that it was in such a craft that my cousin, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, perished. Now are you sure, Mahony, that that vessel you carried off the young boy in, *did* go down?"

"Be gorra, sir, I begin to doubt it. We never saw more of her, certainly; but, by Jabers, after knocking her ribs for a couple of hours against the sunken rocks off Quince Island, it was only natural to suppose she made a hole in the water the moment she beat off the rocks—and yet she mightn't."

"No, I am sure she did not," said William O'Grady; "for afterwards I contrived to ask a question or two of old Captain Pocock, the naval officer I heard speaking in the club-room, and he gave me the year and date of the time he visited the Scilly Islands. The lad found in the Dutchman was then about fourteen years old. He also remembered the name of the Dutch vessel he was found in; for the lad's courage, and dexterity, and seamanship, pleased old Captain Pocock, who has ever since interested himself about this Captain Morris."

"What was the name, Mister William?" asked Dennis Mahony, anxiously. "It was a devil of a name—I could make nothing of it. But, be gorra, if I heard it I'd remember it, in reason of your father's noticing it, and laughing at the attempts we made at it."

"Well, Captain Pocock said the galliote's name was 'Hohengoleim.'"

"Oh, musha, begor, that's her!" exclaimed Dennis. "We called her the Old-hen-and-go-lame; but we never made out where she hailed from, for the crew were all drowned, and the other name was the dickens of a name—as long as my arm, and as full of h's, and r's, and l's as would puzzle St. Patrick himself. What will be done now, sir? Here's another chip of the same block; for as sure as I'm alive, this Captain Morris is your cousin, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice."

"It's no matter if he is," returned William O'Grady; "let him find his name out if he likes. Let me manage

and succeed in my present project, and I do not care who holds the estates. But you said, Dennis, that you had something to relate about this Captain Morris. What is it?"

"Why, sir, I heard that the brig lay-to, some weeks ago, off Castle Townsend, and that Captain Morris went ashore and visited Granville Castle, and was shown all over it. That, afterwards, he went to Innismoyle Abbey; and it was remarked by several of the household, that the Captain was wonderful like to Sir Gerald Granville, your cousin. Now, be gorra, this looks mighty queer."

"Yes," rejoined William O'Grady, "it looks as if he had gained some clue or other to induce him to endeavour to trace his origin. Now should my cousin Gerald fall in the wars, which is not unlikely, this brother of his (and I am satisfied he is his brother), would be a sad stumbling-block to my father's schemes."

"Faix, your honour's father is likely, by all accounts, to bring his own head to the block, if he doesn't give up his political schemes, as he calls them. They say the Pretender was forced to slip his cable, and that the whole thing is knocked on the head."

"Where did you hear that, Dennis?" asked William O'Grady, anxiously.

Dennis Mahony looked up into his master's face with a hesitating expression on his own features. But after a moment he said:

"There was a man from Mr. Comerford's came in last night before I left the Tower to come on board; and he said Miss Grace told him to tell you to take care, for there were officers all over the country, hunting out political offenders; and that it was said your father's real name was known, and that he and you were suspected of being in the country."

As Dennis Mahony mentioned the name of Miss Grace, a deep flush spread over the face of William O'Grady; but the next instant a dark frown altered the entire expression of his countenance, as he almost savagely said:

"Why the devil didn't you mention this first?"

"Faix, first or last, Mister William, it can make no difference," returned Mahony, in a dogged kind of tone. "You tould me niver to mention Miss Grace's name again. So, faix, I didn't mind mentioning it at all, for the matter of that."

"Here, take the helm," said O'Grady, giving the tiller to Dennis, and pacing the long deck of the lugger in deep thought.

On sailed the Warhawk, smoothly and swiftly. The Mizen Head was passed, and then, hauling her wind, she held on her course, with the breeze freshening. Dunmanus and Bantry Bays were passed, and, as the sun sank into the western wave, the Warhawk was running through the sound called the Blasques. When the shades of night fell over the deep, she ran into a cove under David's Head, and there let go her anchor, having run, from sunrise, a distance of one hundred and twenty-two miles.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ATHERSTONE HALL was, at the period of our story, an irregular, yet handsome, pile of building. Built on a gentle elevation above the river Kenmare, and facing the broad bay, misnamed Kenmare River, it commanded a most magnificent view over sea and land. On the land side towards the north, the country was thickly wooded at that period: the nearest town of any consequence was Tralee.

Its warlike builder, living in a period of perpetual strife and warfare, rendered Castle Atherstone a place of considerable strength. A broad moat encompassed three sides of the building, which had turrets and watch-towers

and drawbridge, and portcullis. But all these remains of feudal times had, in the reign of Anne, entirely vanished. The moat had become guiltless of water for years, and Mrs. Atherstone's husband had formed it into a pleasant plantation. Gardens and shrubberies had usurped the place of grim defences, and various modern improvements, tastefully executed, rendered Atherstone Hall, at the period of our story, a handsome and commodious mansion.

Aleen was in raptures with the house, the view, and the delightful pleasure-gardens. Mrs. Atherstone herself was haunted by many affecting remembrances in again taking up her residence in her once most happy home. Time had softened, but not at all obliterated, the memory of him she had so tenderly loved, and so soon lost. Four years of happy, tranquil, wedded life: a mother, and then the grave closed over the father also.

The first few weeks which she passed in her old home brought back to her mind these foregone sorrows, and a quiet and not unpleasant melancholy stole over her mind. But Aleen, as youth generally does, looked forward with hope and joy stirring her young heart, and filling her mind with visions of happiness; she trusted that the clouds that hung over her hopes would be chased away, and a bright, clear sky succeed.

Aleen passed many an hour rambling with her maid along the pleasant banks of the river, and on the romantic shores of the bay. Her thoughts were far off with her absent lover, recollecting a thousand little events dear to memory, for they all tended to prove the deep love and devotion Gerald felt for her.

Rambling one day along the shores of the bay with Mrs. Atherstone and a female attendant, they came to a long jutting crag that ran abruptly into the sea. The tide was then very low spring; and for the first time since their arrival, they perceived they could pass the rocks, and visit the singular caverns on the other side. As they were picking their way across the rocks, Aleen saw a small boat push from the beach, and pull slowly out into

the bay. Three persons were in it, and from the low mast, Aleen could discern a long net hanging down, as if drying.

"Had we been a little sooner, we might have got some prawns and shrimps," said Aleen. "They were catching them in the hollows of the rocks, I dare say. I have observed a boat here fishing several times, and you have been promising me some ever since our arrival."

"Well, in truth, Aleen love," responded Mrs. Atherstone, "you should have had them, but our fishermen say it is early in the season. I never heard of their fishing for those little fish in this bay; they catch them, I know, up the river. But look at the singular range of caverns before us. What a number there are!"

In a few moments the ladies and their attendants had entered a spacious and deep cavern, with sides beautifully cut by nature into numerous pillars. In fact, so regular and artistically were they arranged, that, for a time, it puzzled the explorers to make out whether they were not the work of human hands.

"We must defer the examination of these caverns," said Mrs. Atherstone, "till we have two or three attendants with torches. We are already in the dark, and probably have not penetrated half way."

"What a splendid place for smugglers!" exclaimed Aleen. "I fancy they might hide their booty here for years without fear of detection."

"This bay was always a noted resort for such people," observed Mrs. Atherstone; "and I remember, years ago, hearing many wild and terrible tales of the lawless smugglers of this coast. But that was during the troubled reigns of James and William."

As Mrs. Atherstone spoke, and they were turning to retrace their steps, the loud "Hallo!" of a man's voice was heard, and somewhat startled them. As they faced the entrance of the cave, they plainly perceived a human figure entering, and then again they heard themselves summoned to come forth, as the tide was rising. The

adies, rather alarmed, hurried out of the cave, and perceived a gentleman waiting their exit. He bowed very politely, saying—

“I have taken the liberty, madam, of summoning you forth, as perhaps you are not conscious that the way you came is now impracticable, as the spring tide rolls in over this flat with exceeding rapidity; and though no danger whatever exists, still you would be detained many hours waiting, as the ascent by the cliffs would be too dangerous for you to attempt.”

While the stranger was speaking, both ladies raised their eyes to him; and both, at the same moment, thought they had seen his face before—but the next glance satisfied them they had not.

The stranger was a tall and very handsome man about eight and twenty, or thirty years of age. He was simply, though handsomely attired in a dark green hunting-suit; he wore a broad black belt over his shoulder, which held a shot and powder flask; and in his hand he carried a short and very handsome silver-mounted fowling-piece.

“We feel much obliged, in truth,” replied Mrs. Atherstone, “for your warning. It was extremely indiscreet of us to venture here without a guide or pilot.”

“Do not be uneasy, madam. The boat in which I came this morning to explore these caves, and to amuse myself in shooting the puffins, and parrots, and other birds which frequent the cliffs, is still here. I saw you, madam, from the bay, and made bold to row ashore and warn you. The men are fishermen, and will land you on the other side of the rock. You may thus, for an hour longer, continue your examination of some of the caves, which even this tide will not reach.”

“I thank you, sir, for your courtesy,” returned Mrs. Atherstone; “and will accept the offer of your boat at once. I do not wish to delay my return, as I live sufficiently near to visit the spot at a future and more convenient time.”

The stranger bowed, and, hailing the boat, the men

pulled in to a convenient range of low rocks, from which the ladies might easily step into the little craft, on the stern sheets of which the stranger ordered the men to place his boat cloak.

The water was perfectly calm; not even a light swell rolled into the bay—a thing not very usual on that wild coast. Having seated themselves, the men pulled out to avoid the sunken rocks; and Aleen, who loved to sail on the broad deep waters she so constantly had a view of from her window, enjoyed the short transit round the rocks into the bay on the other side. Atherstone Hall was now distinctly visible, and had a noble and imposing appearance from the sea, backed by the dark woods.

"Your mansion, madam," said the stranger, following the direction of both the ladies' eyes, "has truly a most imposing and very picturesque appearance."

"It stands in a very favourable position," responded Mrs. Atherstone, "and certainly enjoys a most varied prospect over sea and land."

"Yes," returned the stranger, in a thoughtful tone; "it occupies the identical spot where once stood a very different edifice; and, to me, it brings back some very painful reflections on bygone times."

Mrs. Atherstone seemed surprised, while Aleen looked up for an instant at the speaker, and caught his dark and meaning eyes steadily fixed upon her. It was but for an instant, for he let his glance drop; yet there was an expression in that glance, which troubled the maiden—she scarcely knew why.

"Pray may I inquire," asked Mrs. Atherstone, with a slight manifestation of curiosity in her manner, "to whom we are indebted for our rescue from the danger either of getting wet or enduring a very tedious delay?"

"I am quite a stranger, madam," replied the unknown "to this country altogether. That is as far as personal acquaintance goes, though I know all about its history. I have been nearly a fortnight exploring these rocks. You will, I trust, forgive me for having mentioned that

the vicinity recalled unpleasant recollections ; particularly the spot where your mansion stands ; for on that very site stood the castle of the once powerful chief of the Desmonds. 'This territory,' he added, with a smile, 'was once my ancestors' It was won by yours with the sword, like many other fair lands in this green Island."

"Then probably," returned Mrs. Atherstone, somewhat surprised, "you are a Desmond?"

"No, madam, not in name ; but closely connected with that family. My name is Fitzmaurice."

"With a start of intense surprise, mingled with a singularly painful feeling, Aleen again gazed, but this time unshrinkingly, at the speaker.

"Fitzmaurice!" exclaimed Mrs. Atherstone, equally astonished, if not confounded, by the words of the stranger ; "how is that? Are there two families of that name? Or are you a relative of the Fitzmaurices of the County Cork?"

"Relative, I cannot call myself, madam ; though, probably, about two hundred years ago, the now divided families might have sprung from the same stock. My forefathers were the Kerry Fitzmaurices. Our ancestor was James Fitzmaurice, a brother of Sir John Desmond ; and it was from this chieftain (James) that Sir Ralph Atherstone won these broad lands."

Just at that moment, the boat reached a convenient landing place. Mrs. Atherstone made no reply ; but she thought much upon the singular coincidence of her thus accidentally becoming acquainted with members of both the families of Fitzmaurice.

After stepping ashore, Mrs. Atherstone reiterated her acknowledgments of the obligation she was under to Mr. Fitzmaurice ; and though she somehow did not feel inclined to keep up an acquaintance thus made, her natural kindness of heart, and the usual hospitality of her country prevailing, she said—

"Should you prolong your stay in these parts, Mr. Fitzmaurice, I shall be happy to see you at Atherstone

Hall ; and if you are fond of field sports, you are perfectly at liberty to try our woods and fields."

"You are very kind, madam," returned Mr. Fitzmaurice ; "though my stay will not be long, having to join my regiment shortly, I shall feel proud of accepting your kind and hospitable offer."

And bowing very profoundly, they parted.

"Well, Aleen," said Mrs. Atherstone to her thoughtful companion, as they entered the Park-walk, leading to the front of the mansion, "what think you of this day's adventure, and our new acquaintance? We seem doomed to fall in with the name of Fitzmaurice."

"That gentleman," replied Aleen, in a very thoughtful voice, and with her eyes fixed upon the path—"that gentleman is *not* a Fitzmaurice."

Mrs. Atherstone halted in her walk, and, with a look of extreme surprise, gazed into the thoughtful face of her niece, saying—

"What on earth, Aleen, leads you to make so strange an assertion? All that he stated with respect to the Atherstones, and to former owners of this territory of the Desmonds and Fitzmaurices, is strictly true."

"I have nothing to say to the contrary of that," returned Aleen ; and then, with a significant smile, she looked up into the face of Mrs. Atherstone. "But I will tell you," she continued, "why I said what I did, that you may not take me for a witch. When we entered the boat, Mr. Fitzmaurice, as he calls himself, laid that handsome silver-mounted gun of his on the bench for a moment while he adjusted the boat-cloak for you. I cannot say why, but my gaze happened to rest on a plate of silver, on which was engraved a crest, and, underneath, were the initial letters, 'W G. O. G.' The next moment he turned round, as though hastily, and taking up the gun, placed it in a leather case. Now, you know the broken lance is the well known crest of the O'Grady's, and the initial letters are assuredly meant for William Granville O'Grady."

"I see it all now," said Mrs. Atherstone, in a thoughtful manner. "My brother has planned this, or the young man wished to see his way under an assumed name, before he declared himself. Now that he has lost the title and the property of the Granvilles, it shows Ulick still imagines your heart, Aleen, may be won from its first impressions."

"Then, indeed, my father errs most strangely. My love for Gerald will never end. But I somehow fancy my father has nothing to do with this scheme of Mr. O'Grady's. I do not like it; there is something more in it than I can fathom. What do you intend doing, mother dear, should he come? Even before I saw his initials upon the fowling-piece, I felt a secret and unaccountable aversion."

"Oh, my little pet," interrupted Mrs. Atherstone, this time laughing merrily, "those secret aversions of young maidens in love are by no means unaccountable. Damsels with hearts already preoccupied, generally look with a sort of aversion upon gentlemen who evince more than a moderate admiration of their beauty; and it was very plain to be seen that this false Fitzmaurice was wonderfully struck with you. But should he accept my invitation, I shall receive him politely, and as if we knew nothing whatever of his secret. He will very soon perceive the uselessness of following up a pursuit in which he can have no chance of success."

"I will keep out of his way at any rate," said Aleen. "Knowing who he is—for I am satisfied I am right—his presence will be painful to me."

"Well, my love, you can do so. Recollect, however, we promised your father to allow Mr. O'Grady to visit us."

"Yes, yes," interrupted Aleen, "when Mr. O'Grady comes as Mr. O'Grady, well and good. This is Mr. Fitzmaurice," she added laughing; "so he must be content to pay his devoirs to you, dear aunt."

"Well, here we are," said Mrs. Atherstone, entering the open portal of the mansion. "We owe him, at least,

the pleasure of eating our dinners at home, instead of sitting several hours on rocks with no dinner at all—*à vero*.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE reader may probably think we have totally forgotten our hero; but we beg to assure him such is not the case. We fear we are writing a somewhat rambling kind of tale; but for the life and soul of us, we cannot help it now, having, unfortunately for ourselves, got our heroine in Ireland, and our hero in Italy. Now, though wishing very sincerely to bring them both into the same locality; we are puzzled how to do so without destroying the veracity of our story. Begging, therefore, a little longer indulgence from our readers, we return to our hero, whom we left in Turin, expecting a visit from Ulick O'Connor.

In the morning after their meeting at Mrs. Atherstone's, Ulick O'Connor was shown by O'Regan into Gerald's apartment. O'Connor still wore his monkish garment over his undress military habit; but, on entering Gerald's room, he laid it aside, and, taking the chair offered him by the colonel, sat down, saying—

“I owe you, colonel, too great an obligation to think of any other mode of settling our difference than simple explanation. Without any feeling of anger, therefore, for the unguarded words you made use of yesterday, may I ask what induced you to say what you did?”

“Feeling the happiness of a whole life at stake,” replied Gerald, surprised at the mild manner of the exiled prince, “I perhaps rashly hazarded words that had no other foundation than surmises formed in my own mind, after hearing Mrs. Atherstone's history of herself, and

how Aleen came under her protection. It struck me—pardon me, sir, if I unintentionally touch a chord painful, perhaps, now even after the lapse of years—it struck me that, passionately attached, as you declared you were, to my unfortunate mother, it was not very likely that so soon after you could have formed a second attachment, and your sister be wholly ignorant of it. Again, I was struck with the circumstances attending Mrs. Atherstone's confinement, and the birth and death of her child during her husband's absence—you were in the mansion at the time; and though Mrs. Atherstone ardently desired to see her offspring, which *she knew* was born alive—for she insists that her senses were then perfect—her wish was never gratified. These circumstances, trivial, perhaps, in themselves, nevertheless forcibly pressed upon my mind, and at once I came to the conclusion that Aleen was not your child, but the child of your sister."

Gerald paused. Never for an instant did the dark, expressive eyes of O'Connor leave the face of his companion, as he spoke. He betrayed no manner of emotion, his fine features wearing an aspect of undisturbed tranquillity.

"You have been candid, colonel, in your explanations," responded O'Connor. "I have no right to interfere with any man in thinking what he pleases; but as you openly expressed your opinions in my presence, I considered myself in a manner called upon to request you to give me your reasons for such an assertion as you made. You have done so fairly and candidly; at the same time I do not see that I am called upon to lay open my past life to you or any one. Therefore, I make no comment upon what you have said. A time may come for explanation, but not now. I will say, however, this much, putting aside political motives and creed, there is no man living I would prefer to bestow a daughter of mine upon than you, Colonel; and if you will simply promise me not to hold any communication, either by letter or otherwise, with Mrs. Atherstone and her niece

for the space of one year, I will undertake, on my part, should we all be living at the expiration of that time, to offer no manner of opposition to your winning the heart and hand of Aleen, should your wishes tend that way after the stipulated period shall have expired. If you hesitate, I must—”

“Nay,” hastily interrupted Colonel Granville, “I do not hesitate. I give you my sacred word to fulfil your wishes. At the same time, I trust no force——”

“You may rest satisfied,” interrupted O’Connor, with a slight shade passing over his countenance, “that Aleen shall never be forced to do anything contrary to the wishes of her heart or her feelings. I am no tyrant, Colonel, though the victim of tyranny. I will say no more. But,” and he held out his hand with a kind and affectionate look and manner, “believe me, I am grateful in heart and feelings towards you. You said that I loved your mother before she became your father’s wife. You are right. I loved her with a devotion and fervour not to be surpassed. You may think it strange a man should love to such excess without some hope. Alas! time has not obliterated the memory of those days; and there was a brief period when I thought my love was returned. I have never known one really happy hour from that time to this. My blighted hopes tended to make me what I was; but, enough of the past.” And with a sudden effort O’Connor seemed to conquer some violent emotion; for, after a pause, he suddenly drew from within his vest a small case, held by a minute gold-chain. Touching a spring, he exclaimed, “Look, Colonel Granville, upon that face, and say, could a man that once loved those matchless features ever forget?”

Surprised and considerably moved, Gerald looked upon a beautifully executed portrait of his unfortunate mother. He knew it at once; for a full-length portrait of his parent hung in the picture-gallery, in Granville Castle. Never, perhaps, did his gaze rest upon so fascinating a face. It was not alone the perfect symmetry of feature that

distinguished that lovely portrait. It was the expression, so soft, so tender, beaming from the brilliant eyes, that caught at once the admiration of the beholder. Gerald no longer wondered at O'Connor's despair at losing her; but it more firmly convinced him, that his surmises, with respect to Aleen's birth, were something more than mere suspicions.

"I cannot," said O'Connor, after a long pause, and speaking in a low feeling voice, "I cannot hate the son of her I loved so deeply and so truly. Though, in the frenzy of disappointment, I swore deadly hatred to him who won from me such a treasure, yet as the grave holds both, my love and my hatred are of little moment. Nevertheless, I will carry the former with me to the tomb. The latter is forgotten. These recollections, Colonel, overpower me; and I long to drive them away in active life. I bid you farewell with no other feeling in my heart than that of affection. Remember your promise. We know not what is in the womb of time."

Wringing the hand of Gerald Granville with much emotion and kindness of manner, O'Connor threw his monk's mantle over his stately form, and abruptly left the saloon.

For nearly an hour the Colonel remained immersed in profound and not unpleasant thought. Rousing himself from his reverie, he rose with a cheerful and hopeful spirit. The future appeared in brighter colours; and the lovely image of Aleen seemed to come before his mind's eye with a sweet smile of trust and hope upon her ruby lip. He felt fully convinced in his own mind that Aleen was truly Mrs. Atherstone's daughter: he also fancied he could surmise O'Connor's object in deceiving his sister with respect to her child's death. At that period, Mrs. Atherstone declared that Ulick O'Connor was wrapped up in gloomy despondency, and completely ruled by a narrow-minded and bigoted priest. Blindly devoted to the creed of his ancestors, Ulick had probably been induced, by the idea of saving the child's

soul, to persuade the mother that her infant had died. Perhaps, in after years, when firmly wedded to his own faith, he might have restored her; but it certainly was not at all likely that, being madly in love with Emmeline Granville, he should unite himself to another. All these surmises and conjectures were only to be solved by time.

"A year will soon pass," thought Gerald, "amid the stirring events now taking place in Flanders and Belgium."

Without any further delay the young Colonel resolved to join the Duke of Marlborough. A few days previous to his interview with Ulick O'Connor, he had received letters from his old friend and comrade Arthur Carisford, who was with his regiment at Bellenghen. Preparations were being made on both sides for the renewal of the war, which Captain Carisford thought would be hotly contested.

O'Regan received directions to prepare for immediate departure. He intended to proceed first to Vienna, where he expected to receive letters from Mr. Briefless, having written to that gentleman some time back.

After a tedious journey, Gerald reached Vienna, and there unexpectedly met Prince Eugene, from whom he received a most friendly and gracious reception. His highness stated that the Duke was assembling his army in Flanders, and that the French General, the Duke de Vendôme, was already in the field. Colonel Granville, therefore, hurried to his banker's to ascertain if Mr. Briefless had forwarded the needful, without which we can neither get on in peace or war. The remittances had arrived some time; and there was also a letter of recent date from Mr. Briefless, marked "most important." Gerald quickly broke the seal and read the contents. His astonishment was indeed great when he read a full statement of the recovery of his uncle's will, and, consequently, his restoration to the title and fortune of the late Sir Hugh Granville. The worthy lawyer ended his long

letter, by earnestly imploring his young friend to be contented with the laurels he had already won, and not, like a madman, allow a worthless ounce of lead to deprive him of doing some good to his fellow creatures, by spending a noble fortune amongst them.

Gerald could not but smile at his worthy old friend's epistle; and as he was anxious to resume his journey, he sat down, on returning to his hotel, and fully answered the latter. O'Regan, when made acquainted with the news from Ireland, became bewildered with joy; and, by no means averse to a little fighting when nothing else was to be done, now thought, like the little lawyer, that his master had had quite enough of war, and was not a little angry and disappointed on finding he still persisted in joining the army.

"Faix, it's too bad," muttered O'Regan, as he packed up his master's effects, "to be shot at for mere amusement. Honour and glory are mighty fine things, when your pocket his filled by ther. But, by my conscience, it's more honourable spending twenty thousand a year in our own dear country, than in killing poor devils that never did you a pin's-worth of harm; and, by St. Patrick, may get knocked on the head yourself."

But impatient as he was to get home, O'Regan was forced to be satisfied with his master's assurance, that after one more campaign, provided it pleased Providence to preserve him, he would return to Ireland.

Sir Gerald Granville joined the Duke at Lorgniers. But it is not our intention to weary the reader with the details of the great Duke's campaigns. It will be sufficient to state that Sir Gerald gained fresh laurels at Oudenarde; and at the Battle of Rantzæ, he had the good fortune to be of great service to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, afterwards George II., who, in this attack, gallantly charged at the head of Bulac's Dragoons, and had his horse shot under him. Sir Gerald raised the Prince, and remounted him on his own horse. Colonel Laschky was killed by the side of the Prince. Our hero

was present at the siege of Ghent, and, with the Duke of Argyle, took possession of that citadel. Here terminated his military career.

Having received a severe wound, Gerald remained in Brussels for several months; but, at length, became extremely anxious to return to England. Upwards of a year had now expired since he parted with O'Connor in Turin; and, from that period, he had not received the slightest intelligence of those who were so dear to him, though he heard occasionally from Mr. Briefless and Mr. Harmer. They, however, knew nothing of his acquaintance with Mrs. Atherstone, for Gerald strictly refrained from mentioning the name. He was now free to make any enquiries he pleased. He had heard that the attempt of the French King in favour of the Chevalier St. George, in 1715, had signally failed, and that several important captures had been made of the conspirators, among whom was the Duke of Hamilton; but the name of O'Conner did not appear.

Exceedingly anxious to gain some intelligence of Mrs. Atherstone and his beloved Aleen, our hero quitted Brussels as soon as possible, and, reaching Dover, proceeded, with but little delay, to London. On the morning after his arrival in the metropolis, he called at the mansion of Mrs. MacMahon as the most likely place to gain some intelligence of Mrs. Atherstone. But here he was disappointed, for Mrs. MacMahon was then in Ireland. He was leaving the mansion, rather vexed, when he suddenly thought that the housekeeper might know something of one so very intimate with her mistress.

"Pray, madam," said he, retracing his steps, and seeking a second interview with the dame, "pray can you inform me whether a lady I once saw in this house, and whom you must remember to have been on a visit here about six or seven years ago, has returned from abroad? I mean the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone."

"Oh, dear yes, sir," replied the housekeeper. "There was no fear of my forgetting the good lady and her

laughter—on their return from abroad, they resided here for a time, with my mistress, and afterwards left London for their estates in Ireland. I cannot say where they are situated, but Mrs. MacMahon, who is now in Dublin, residing in —— Square, will be able to inform you.”

This intelligence greatly pleased Sir Gerald Granville, who, thanking the old dame, returned to his hotel, and gave Dennis O'Regan the pleasing intelligence that he was to pack up and get ready for immediate departure, as he intended to proceed, without further delay, to Castle Granville.

But as the Duke of Marlborough was in town, and wished to present him to the new Sovereign of Great Britain, George the First, he was forced to delay a day or two longer ; highly pleased, however with his presentation at Court, though impatient at being detained.

At last, he set out, to the infinite joy of his impatient follower, and reached Dublin without accident or adventure, a thing not very frequent in those days.

CHAPTER XXX.

GRANVILLE CASTLE, the chief residence of the Granville family in Ireland, from the first period of their settling there, was of a much older date than Atherstone Hall, or Glandore Abbey. It was first built by an Irish Chieftain, named MacMurchad, so far back as the reign of the second Richard ; but little, if any, of its original design, remained standing at the period of our story. Like Atherstone Hall, its moat, its draw-bridge, and ramparts, had all disappeared ; and a fine and substantial mansion, with still some defences, remained standing in the midst

of a noble park, close to the borders of Glandore Harbour, a beautiful and extensive sheet of water, almost landlocked. On the opposite shore, close by the entrance of the Miros river, stood Glandore Abbey, a stately building, erected by Sir Gerald's grandfather, on the site of an ancient Abbey of that name. The waters of Glandore Harbour, about a mile or more in width, separated the two mansions.

Sir Gerald Granville's reception at Castle Granville was enthusiastic; rejoicings, illuminations, &c., succeeded each other. Numerous visitors were invited; and, for nearly a fortnight, none of the numerous retainers of the family were allowed to return to their homes, by the master of the revels, the delighted Dennis O'Regan.

Mr. Harmer was to remain at Castle Granville as domestic chaplain. He felt proud of his former pupil, and was greatly pleased at the prospect of passing the remainder of his life in the house of Sir Gerald Granville.

In Dublin, our hero learned that Mrs. Atherstone and her supposed daughter were living in Atherstone Hall; and, as no impediment now appeared between him and Aleen, he was most anxious to set out for their residence, and only waited the departure of his guests. Never, for a moment, did Sir Gerald feel any doubt concerning Aleen's love for himself. Vanity had no share in this feeling; his faith in her arose from his knowledge of the pure and virtuous mind of the fair girl, who was dearer to him than life.

At length, the numerous guests departed; and the very next day, attended only by O'Regan, well mounted and armed—for the days of Queen Anne and George the First were not exactly the period for riding a hundred miles across the country without being prepared for contingencies—Sir Gerald Granville started for Atherstone Hall.

It was the latter end of October; and, though the

morning was fine, there were appearances in the sky of rain before night. At this period, the roads through the remote parts of Ireland were very bad, and only passable on horseback. The traffic from one town to another, was carried on by pack-horses, or low cars without wheels. The houses of the gentry were few, and, in truth, far between; and houses of entertainment were only to be found in large towns.

Sir Gerald Granville traversed nearly the same road as his uncle and O'Regan had travelled some sixteen years previously. No improvement whatever had taken place. The country was again in an extremely disturbed state. Parties, under various denominations, prowled about during the night, and many of the houses of the gentry, known to be obnoxious to the cause of the Pretender, were attacked. The attempt of the Chevalier to land in Scotland, though completely frustrated, caused many lawless and discontented men to assemble under the specious pretence of aiding the cause of their rightful King, but, in fact, to commit plunder and other outrage.

A bill had just passed to attain the Pretender and all his adherents. Numbers were accused who were really innocent; large parties of military patrolled the country, sometimes committing unnecessary violence upon the already sufficiently distressed peasantry. So ill defended was the sea-coast, along the southern and western shores, that smugglers flourished in open defiance of the laws, and the one or two small cruisers kept occasionally off the coast. If encountered, the smugglers rarely abandoned their cargoes without a fight, and consequent loss of life.

At the period of Colonel Grauville's journey, the Government had sent to cruize on the south and west coast of Ireland, a very fine and fast-sailing gun brig, with a picked crew and a party of mariners. This vessel was under the command of Captain Cuthbert Morris, formerly of *The William and Mary*. The brig was stationed in Bantry Bay, with two small cutters under her orders.

Captain Morris had already taken several prizes ; and a determination was formed by the desperate gang of smugglers who frequented that coast to destroy the brig, her captain showing so resolute a spirit in rooting them out of their haunts.

Sir Gerald and O'Regan pursued their journey at a smart pace, intending to pass the night at Glinn, where entertainment for man and beast was to be had. The next day they could reach Atherstone Hall.

But with the best intentions in the world, we are often prevented by unforeseen events. Though the early morning was fine, the weather rapidly changed as the day advanced. Before midday, a thick, fast-drifting scud, came over the hills, followed by a drizzling shower ; and, towards evening, a dense fog spread over the land, with every prospect of a regular down-pour at sunset. The travellers were then passing a dreary tract of country, over a moor of great extent, but dimly visible in the thick fog and heavy drift then commencing.

After a time, Sir Gerald Granville stopped his horse.

"Are you sure, Dennis," said he, strapping his military mantle tightly about him, "are you sure that we have taken the right track across this heath ? I trusted to you when we came to the cross roads. Do you think you have taken the right one ?"

"Upon my conscience, Colonel, I have my doubts about it," returned Dennis, wiping the moisture from his eyes, and trying to see ahead ; but the view was confined to a very few yards.

"There's no kind of mark to go by," continued he ; "I remember, years ago, your honour's uncle was puzzled on crossing this very heath."

"Well, then, I fancy," returned Sir Gerald, "we shall have a pleasant chance of wandering about here till morning ; for no path is visible under our horses' feet, and we cannot see twenty yards before us. Besides, the sun is down—we shall be in the dark in half an hour."

"Be gorra, here's somebody, sir," said Dennis; "I hear the sound of a horse's foot behind us."

As he spoke, the Colonel heard the sounds distinctly, and O'Regan gave a shout that would reach at least half a mile, lest the rider might pass them in the fog.

"Hallo! hallo! what's in the wind, neighbour?" shouted a loud, manly voice. And the moment after, horse and man were beside them.

"What's in the wind?" echoed O'Regan, turning sharply round to face the stranger; "faix, there's nothing very pleasant in it; I never found water very agreeable, unless there was a trifle of whisky mixed with it."

"Be my sowl, you're right, my man," returned the stranger, eyeing the Colonel as he rode up alongside.

Sir Gerald Granville cast a glance upon the speaker, and, as well as he could judge by the fading light, he was a stout, hard-featured man, about three-and-thirty years old. He was mounted on a low, strong, wiry beast, with dropt ears and tail, apparently full of spirit. The rider wore a thick frieze coat, buttoned to the chin, with an ample woollen shawl twisted round his neck, over his mouth, and touching his nose. He pulled down his covering, however, as he looked up at the Colonel, and said—

"God save ye, your honour."

Our hero scarcely knew what to make of the stranger. To judge by his head-dress, which consisted of a species of tarpaulin cap, called, sometimes, a sou-wester, he might be a sea-faring man. Over the neck of his horse swung two kegs, united by a rope. The Colonel thought his character was rather ambiguous.

"It may be your honour," continued the man, "has wandered out of your track."

"So it appears, my good fellow," said Colonel Granville. "Perhaps you can put us on the right one. You shall be amply rewarded for your trouble."

"Where may your lordship be going then?"

"Where I was going, when I halted here, I cannot say,"

returned the Colonel; "but I intended to reach Giinn before nightfall."

"Wheugh!" whistled the stranger. "Not to-night, your honour, with this weather; and, faix, there's worse coming. You took the wrong road at the Cross, and unless you go back to Sleive Allen, and then take the second path to the right, after passing the old tower—but, faix, here's a sou-wester, and no mistake." And, as the man spoke, a violent gale, with a heavy down-fall, came sweeping over the heath.

"Well, my man, there's no use talking of going back. Where can you guide us for temporary shelter?"

"Why then, your worship, follow me, and I'll guide you in less than an hour to the old Abbey of Glencross."

"Arrah, man," impatiently interrupted Dennis, who was busy minutely scanning the stranger and his kegs; "what the dickens would my master do in an old ruin, this time of night?"

"What would he be doing?" repeated the stranger; "faix, eating and drinking as good a drop of potheen as ever crossed your lips; and, by my sowl, by the look of ye, ye're not fond of water. There's oats, too, for your horses; and, though I won't promise ye feather-beds, a cushla, ye'll have a good turf fire, and a stool to sit on; and, faix, that's better than scrambling and straying over this heath all night. So follow me, your honour—it's folly wasting time."

And striking his beast with his one spur, on he went, at a smart pace, followed by Sir Gerald and Dennis, who kept muttering to himself sundry sentences, half aloud, such as—

"I don't much like that devil-may-care kind of chap. Something of my ould acquaintance, Phelim O'Toole, about him—only he's a half-score years younger. Be gorra, I'll wager it's not empty kegs he's got across his beast, nor are they filled with water. I'll have an eye on you, my boy. If he puts us into a hornet's nest he shall pay the piper, or my name's not O'Regan."

As they followed their guide, whom they with difficulty kept in sight, the storm of rain and wind came on with renewed violence, driving fiercely in their faces, and rendering the high-mettled steeds they bestrode impatient and fretful.

Their guide pushed across the heath in a different direction to the way they were previously going, and they came suddenly upon a stony, rough, bridle-road, which soon led down a steep dingle, through the middle of which ran a small rivulet, tumbling and tossing, and roaring over the many impediments it encountered in its course. It was now so dark—what with the fall of night, and the thick mist and rain—that the Colonel was forced to hallo to his guide, in order to ascertain where he was. However, as they descended the steep dingle, they got sheltered from the rough pelting of the storm; and, getting to the bottom, they came upon a tolerable broad path, winding through the valley. Just at that moment, the not-to-be-mistaken sound of a large body of horse, in full trot after them, reached the ears of the Colonel and his attendant. Whether their guide heard the sound or not they could not say, but he very suddenly disappeared; for though our hero halloed to him, no answer was returned.

Rather surprised, Sir Gerald Granville had scarcely time to draw on one side before a party of armed riders, for he could hear the gingling of their accoutrements as they rapidly rode down the dingle, came right upon them. As soon as they were perceived a sharp voice shouted out:

“Stand, in the King’s name, whoever you are, and come forward.”

“My good sir,” said Sir Gerald, laughing at the contradictory orders he had received, “we have been standing these five minutes, on hearing your horse thundering down the pass, not wishing to be run over, which seemed not unlikely.”

“And pray, sir, who are you?” demanded the same sharp voice; “and what is your business at this time of night in this part of the country?”

"You are easily answered, sir," replied our hero. "I am Colonel Granville, at your service, and as to my business, at present it is seeking a shelter for the night."

"A thousands pardons, Colonel," exclaimed the young officer of dragoons, in a tone of great politeness. "It's so confoundedly dark I can scarcely discern my horse's head. We are in pursuit of a notorious gang of smugglers, who give themselves the name of 'White Jacobites,' and we expect to entrap them at Glencross Abbey."

"Glencross Abbey!" echoed our hero. "I was going there, under the guidance of a fellow we met, and who has disappeared."

"Well, Colonel Granville, with your leave, we will proceed; and if you have no objection, I will be your guide to this Abbey of Glencross. It will, at least, afford you some kind of shelter for the night, as it is not possible you can make your way back across the moor."

To this proposal Sir Gerald willingly agreed, provided they could dislodge the smugglers, or Jacobites, he expected to find there.

As they rode at an easy pace, side by side, the young dragoon officer informed Colonel Granville that his name was Reilly, and that he held a lieutenant's commission in the — Dragoons; that he had heard the Colonel's name mentioned by his commanding officer, who, with the remainder of the troop, was quartered for the time at Tralee.

"Have you any positive information respecting this gang or party of White Jacobites?" asked Sir Gerald. "I heard of them a few days ago, and was told that they had the audacity to attack several gentlemen's houses in the vicinity of Bantry."

"The report, Colonel, is quite true, I am sorry to say," responded the lieutenant. "A most daring outrage has been committed by these rascals. The mansion of a lady of rank was attacked in the night, about eight days ago, and the lady's daughter, a most beautiful and accomplished girl, carried off."

"Good God, sir!" exclaimed our hero, suddenly checking his horse, with a feeling of intense anxiety. "What is the name of the lady carried off?"

"Miss Atherstone, Colonel, of Atherstone Hall."

"My God! can this be possible?" exclaimed Sir Gerald Granville, in a voice trembling with alarm and age. "I must at once proceed."

"Nay, Colonel," interrupted the lieutenant. "Till day-light it would be impossible for you to cross the country with my score of men; I have traversed many miles, in every direction, in hopes of discovering where the villain carried the young lady. Captain Stanmore, who is my commanding officer at Tralee, desired me to use every exertion to gain some trace of Miss Atherstone; and the commander of the gun-brig, at Bantry, immediately sent off two cutters to watch the coast. The lady's mother, who is in a state of distraction, declares that the villains will carry her daughter off to the French coast. She has a suspicion, I suppose, who the rascals were set on by."

"You have given me most painful intelligence, Lieutenant Reilly," said Sir Gerald; "for the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone is a very dear friend of mine; and the loss of her daughter is a terrible blow. But when we reach this abbey, I will thank you for any particulars you may have heard of the outrage. I can, myself, surmise who may be the author of the abduction."

"Most willingly, Colonel Granville," replied theagoon officer. "I will, also, lend you any assistance in my power."

At that moment, one of the dragoons, who was riding ahead, halted, saying that the walls of the abbey were close by; and, as the two gentlemen rode up, they could perceive, through the deep gloom of the night, something like the outlines of a very large building.

Distracted and trembling to think what might be the situation of his beloved Aleen—in the power of some lawless ruffian, or in the hands of the same enemy whc

had already proved his deadly hatred to the Granville and Fitzmaurice families, Colonel Granville paid little attention to the manner in which Lieutenant Reilly approached the abbey. He was, however, soon recalled to his recollection by a sudden volley of fire-arms from the windows of the building before them. Whether this was done to intimidate them or not, he could not say ; but no one was hit.

"Draw off your men, Lieutenant," said the Colonel, "or they will riddle you from the windows. Here is a thick belt of trees. Dismount your men, till you reconnoitre and see what you are about. Excuse my giving you advice : but it would be uselessly exposing your men to keep them on this spot."

"I shall be delighted to be under your orders, Colonel," said Lieutenant Reilly, dismounting the men, and placing the clump of trees between them and the building.

"There is a stronger party within the abbey than you may be aware of," he added.

At this time the rain ceased falling, and the gale began to abate. Suddenly a red-ball was thrown from one of the loop-holes of the old abbey. As soon as it reached the ground, it broke into a brilliant crimson flame, showing everything round and about the building, as distinctly as in broad day.

"Get behind the trees, men," shouted the Colonel Granville.

The next instant a number of bright flashes burst from the loop-holes and windows of the abbey, while the branches and leaves of the trees that sheltered the men were broken and scattered by a volley of balls. Two of the men were hit, but not severely.

"Now, then, my men, make a rush for the door. We must dislodge these rascals before we can get shelter for the night," said Gerald Granville.

Headed by their lieutenant, the dragoons made a rush for the great door-way of the abbey just as the red flame expired, and before those within could re-load. The door,

however, was of considerable strength, and defied, for a while, their utmost efforts. During that time, not a sound was heard in that building.

"I have no doubt," observed the colonel to the lieutenant, "that these fellows have a way of escaping by the back; and you have not men enough to surround the building. I could see the back while the light lasted: it is a very lofty wall enclosing a yard."

A loud crash announced the giving way of the door; at no display of fire-arms took place. Some of the men were provided with torches in tin-cases. A few of these were lighted: and then they could discern a wide dilapidated hall, with an equally ruinous staircase in front; at no sign of the villains who had fired upon them. The men, with their officer, dispersed over the old edifice to discover, if possible, the means of escape resorted to by the ruffians; while Sir Gerald, with his mind fully occupied by matters of far greater interest, entered a large room without a door, preceded by O'Regan holding torch.

"This is bad news your honour has heard," said Dennis, as he looked into his master's troubled features. But, please God, we will track the scoundrels yet. The thing that was here were merely smugglers. Look, sir. The gorra, here's the very kegs the rascal that was guiding our honour into this pretty nest of rapparees had round his horse's neck. Faix, and half empty already," muttered Dennis, putting his nose to the bung-hole. "Real theen, Colonel," added he, with a knowing smile.

"There's a fire in that grate," observed Sir Gerald. Throw some of those pieces of timber on the top of it. We want something to dry us. And then see if you can find any provender for the horses. That fellow spoke of hay and oats. They may have taken themselves off; but there was hay, or oats, they are here still."

"I'll hunt them out, Colonel, if they are to be had. They have been eating and drinking here; for here's a piece of ham and lashings of bread, on a large oak-table."

Just then, Lieutenant Reilly entered the room.

"The place is quite deserted, Colonel Granville," said he; "they got out at the back; and the wood in the rear is of considerable extent. I, therefore, thought it useless to attempt a pursuit in the dark. Ah! by Jove! here's food of some sort, which will be very acceptable to the men, who have found plenty of hay and straw, and a large chest of oats in an out-house; but the building itself, excepting one large room where I have quartered my men, is totally destitute of furniture, and in a perfectly ruinous state."

"Most likely," returned Sir Gerald Granville, "they merely used the place as a rendezvous. If I remember right, Glencross Abbey is close to an inlet of the sea, navigable at high water. Perhaps the vaults under the abbey may contain tubs or other contraband articles."

"We shall make a search at day-break, Colonel," responded the Lieutenant. "By the way, this fire is very cheering." And the lieutenant drew a bench over, and sat down by Sir Gerald.

"I will thank you, Lieutenant Reilly," said Colonel Granville, "if you will let me know all you have heard of the abduction of Miss Atherstone. In a few hours it will be day-light; and as I do not wish to lose a moment, I shall set out as soon as the dawn appears. I hope the men are not severely hurt?"

"Mere flesh-wounds, Colonel," returned the lieutenant. "I shall likewise leave at day-break; and will now let you know all I heard of this daring abduction. It seems by the account of the servants, who were found bound and gagged, that there were nearly twenty men with white scarfs over their shoulders, and black crape over their faces. They described the leader of the men, who were all armed with carbine and pistol, as a tall, powerful man. He was masked. They carried off both Miss Atherstone and her attendant, who slept in the same chamber. They first secured Mrs. Atherstone in her room; for when the domestics were set free by the

people who came up from the village and forced the door of her chamber, she was found dressed and lying insensible on the floor. It appears that the family had only just retired. In fact, the mansion was broken into before the inmates had gone to bed."

"And is it possible," exclaimed Sir Gerald Granville, "that no resistance was made by the servants—no alarm given to the tenantry in the vicinity? How did they effect an entrance? Surely in the present disturbed state of the country, some precautions must have been taken in a mansion containing not only the family, but, no doubt, much valuable property." •

"There is much mystery about the affair, Colonel Granville," replied Lieutenant Reilly; "but the alarm spread all over the country the next day. The tenantry armed themselves, and hunted the whole vicinity for miles round. When intelligence reached Captain Stanmore at Tralee, he sent me, with these twenty troopers, to scour the country. The men who committed the outrage were said to be white Jacobites. But Mrs. Atherstone, though dreadfully ill, sent her servant with a verbal message to me, stating that the men were led by a person she knew, but declined mentioning his name; at the same time requesting me to continue searching the country, and to give information to the captain of the gun-brig, as she greatly feared the abductors intended to take her daughter across the seas. This is all the information, Colonel, I can give you. Yesterday I received private intelligence that a party of white Jacobites were to rendezvous at Glencross Abbey. This led to our accidental meeting. And now I am quite ready to assist you in your search for this unfortunate young lady."

"You are very kind, Lieutenant Reilly," said Colonel Granville, "and I duly appreciate your offer. But I must first proceed to Atherstone Hall, to see Mrs. Atherstone herself. I have every reason to think I know the perpetrator of this outrage."

Thus passed the night. The only refreshment they

could procure was a little spirits and water. The bread, &c., they found left by the smugglers, were given to the men. Good fires, from the heaps of old timber about the place, dried their garments, and the forage found, made the horses fresh and vigorous for the next day's work."

CHAPTER XXXI

LEAVING Lieutenant Reilly to follow up his pursuit of the gang driven out of the Abbey, Sir Gerald Granville and his attendant, with a peasant, procured in the vicinity for a guide, retraced their way through the valley, till they got upon the direct road to Bantry, which place they reached early in the day. During the ride the Colonel and Dennis O'Regan talked over the late melancholy event, and the deep distress the Honourable Mrs. Atherstone must be in at the loss of her niece. Like his master, Dennis was firmly convinced that the O'Grady's were the perpetrators of the outrage at Atherstone Hall; but what their object could be in such an act, it was not possible for Gerald Granville to surmise; for he was not aware of William O'Grady's pursuit of Aleen.

"I was just thinking, sir," suddenly remarked O'Regan, "suppose we were to search the old tower on Bear Island. It served them before as a place of refuge; and, faix, it's not unlikely they might use it again. They can't know your honour is in this country; and no one else would think of such a place."

"It's not an unlikely place, Dennis," replied our hero; "but I differ from you with respect to their not knowing of my return. They have spies, depend on it; and I think that fellow last night was one, and intended decoying us into the Abbey, and probably securing our persons

for a time till they perfected their plans. If they were smugglers, it's rather unlikely they would take us to their haunts. By the way, they fired from the windows, My idea is, they merely wished to intimidate the military. for the shots all struck high above our heads; and the two men hit were from glancing shots. They felt quite sure of being able to leave the Abbey long before the doors could be forced; and, as to pursuit in the night through the thick entangled wood of Mucross, it would be mere folly for mounted troopers."

"Faix, your honour, begging pardon, but we were foolish to leave the Castle, and cross this country at all, without a party of your honour's retainers, well armed and mounted, with us. That villain, O'Grady, would think little of attempting to take your life. You remember the narrow escape, Colonel, you had in London. It's the same villain, be gorra! I wish I had a shot at him, any how."

"You are not far wrong, Dennis; still you must bear in mind, that this same O'Grady, bad and villanous as his acts have been, is still the son-in-law of Sir Vrance Granville, who probably was murdered through his vile projects—but it is fearful to think of such a crime. Had he openly come forward as the husband of Sir Vrance's eldest daughter, I should, as I stated to Mr. Briefless, have been most happy to settle a handsome income on his son, as he is justly entitled to it. But all my proposals were scorned; and they sought to gain the whole inheritance by crime."

Resting their horses a couple of hours at Bantry, the Colonel, whose mind perpetually rested upon the situation of his beloved Aleen, pushed on with a mounted guide across the hills for Atherstone Hall. It was getting late when he arrived at Kenmare; therefore leaving Dennis with the horses, at a small inn, he set out, late as it was, for the Hall, distant about a mile.

His summons for admittance was answered by two stout serving men, followed by the old butler, who knew

the Colonel at once, having been on the continent with Mrs. Atherstone.

"Oh, Sir Gerald Granville, I am rejoiced you are arrived!" exclaimed the old man; "though my mistress did not expect you could possibly be here so soon after her letter. Ah, it will quite revive her."

"I did not get any letter, Stevens," said the Colonel, entering a sitting-room; "but how is your good lady? This has been a terrible shock to her."

"Nearly killed her, sir—nearly killed her," replied the old butler, in a tone of great affection. "But, please God, Colonel, you will be able to restore Miss Atherstone to our good lady; it will kill her else. Here comes Mrs. Jenkins, whom you know; she will tell you all. I will go and see that supper and chambers are prepared."

"Start a boy down to the village, then, Stevens, and desire him to send O'Regan up; but leave the horses there."

"Why so, Colonel? Mistress ordered everything here to be got ready for your reception: she heard of your arrival at Castle Granville, and sent a special messenger off the day before yesterday."

"Ha, that was the day I left," rejoined Colonel Granville.

Mrs. Jenkins entered the room, at that moment, with a countenance expressing considerable pleasure on beholding the Colonel. Mrs. Jenkins had lived with Mrs. Atherstone from the period of her marriage, and was exceedingly attached to her and Aleen.

"This is a very melancholy business, Colonel Granville," said the dame, after addressing a few common-place observations to Sir Gerald; "but the knowledge that you have arrived, has had quite a rallying effect upon my mistress. She insists on seeing you after you have had some supper, for she has not yet retired to rest. Your faithful follower, O'Regan, will feel double interest in hunting after these villains; for they carried off his daughter, Jessy, with our dear young lady."

"His daughter Jessy!" exclaimed the Colonel, greatly surprised; "how came she here, Mrs. Jenkins?"

"In passing through Oxfordshire," replied Mrs. Jenkins, "and visiting your place there, to see Mrs. O'Regan, and tell her she left you and her husband well at Turin, Miss Aleen took such a fancy to Jessy, and she to her, that she came here with us; and an affectionate girl she is."

"I am rejoiced, Mrs. Jenkins," said the Colonel, "that Aleen has Jessy with her."

"You will be better able to judge of the affair when you hear my mistress's account of it," rejoined Mrs. Jenkins; "for many reasons she does not wish to make all the particulars public. But here is Stevens with your supper. By the time you have finished, my lady will be ready to receive you."

"I care little for food, my dear Mrs. Jenkins," returned the Colonel, "for as Aleen's situation occupies all my thoughts, I only wait to hear Mrs. Atherstone's account to commence active search after her abductors."

"Ah, God send the dear child safe from the hands of those wretches!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins; "but I hear my lady's bell. I will come for you, Colonel, when my mistress is ready to receive you. You will perceive how much this misfortune has afflicted and altered her."

In half an hour after, Sir Gerald was ushered into a saloon, where Mrs. Atherstone was reclining on a couch. Our hero was shocked to perceive the effect a few days illness and severe mental distress had produced on the fine features of Aleen's aunt. Kissing, with much emotion, the small, thin hand extended to him, the Colonel sat down beside her. Tears were in her eyes as she pressed his hand, and her voice faltered as she said—

"You cannot think, my dear friend, how your presence revives me. I will now make a strong effort, and not give way to despair. Ah, Colonel Granville, you cannot imagine what I have suffered! but you were right; your

surmise was correct. Aleen is my own, my own beloved child. To know this and to lose her!"

The Colonel was not surprised; he expected this discovery. How she came to find it out now, he was curious to know. With the kindest and most soothing words, Gerald won Mrs. Atherstone, to a certain degree, from her deep grief, and led her to look forward with hope.

"If not too great a trial," said he, "let me know all the particulars of this daring outrage. Such knowledge will, in a measure, guide my actions."

"You shall know all, my dear friend," replied Mrs. Atherstone. "I could not go to rest till I unburdened my mind to you."

Mrs. Atherstone first informed Sir Gerald of her last interview with her brother Ulick, and of his having given her a miniature. She also told him what passed at that interview, with which the reader is already acquainted. We resume her narrative from the period when she encountered the stranger, who assumed the name of Fitzmaurice.

"When Aleen," continued Mrs. Atherstone, "discovered by the initials on the fowling-piece, that the person, under the fictitious name of Fitzmaurice, was, undoubtedly, William Granville O'Grady, I was neither much surprised nor annoyed. I had promised my brother Ulick that I would permit Mr. O'Grady to visit us, and win Aleen's affections if he could.

"'I do not,' said Ulick, 'wish or intend to force her inclinations. She is very young. Many older,' he added, bitterly, 'have changed their minds. She may not be different from others of her sex.'

"I made no remark; but I thought that, after all, Ulick knew little of the female heart. So I let things be as he wished, and looked forward to a visit from Mr. O'Grady. I could partly imagine that person's reason for making his appearance under an assumed name; for he might well fancy that Aleen, knowing your history, would have an invincible aversion to, if not hatred of

name of O'Grady. Under this impression, I advised Aleen not to avoid Mr. O'Grady when he visited us; for, after a few visits, he would see the inutility of persevering.

During this period, I was also very uneasy concerning the safety of my brother. I heard that the attempt of the pretender had signally failed; and that many of the adherents and others engaged in the intended insurrection had been captured and imprisoned, and were to be tried for high treason. I had no immediate means of gaining precise information; but in a short time the names of those imprisoned in Edinburgh and the Tower of London were made public. O'Connor was not amongst them."

"I congratulate you, my dear madam," interposed the colonel.

"Mr. O'Grady," resumed Mrs. Atherstone, "became a frequent visitor; and though Aleen, to please me, who was strictly to fulfil my brother's injunctions, bore the fiction patiently, still it was easy to see her utter scorn and aversion of our guest. Bitterness, and even fierceness, at times characterized his manner and looks, when he perceived Aleen's dislike to his conversation; so I determined at last to put an end to it. In fact, he had declared his love to Aleen herself. One evening, about six months after our first acquaintance, when I was sitting alone with Mr. O'Grady, Aleen having retired under the plea of indisposition, I determined to come to an explanation, and said—

"'It is better, Mr. Fitzmaurice, that we should roughly understand each other, and not carry on this deception any longer.'

"My visitor turned round abruptly, and, with a surprised expression of countenance, said—

"'What can you mean, madam?'

"'Simply,' I replied, 'that although I received you to my house as Mr. Fitzmaurice, I am well aware that your name is O'Grady.'

"He started up, his face flushed, and his dark eyes suddenly flashed with anger.

“ ‘Who, madam, has dared to insinuate that I have deceived you in—’

“ ‘Nay, Mr. O’Grady,’ I interrupted, ‘it is quite useless to think of persisting in misleading me. We were aware, from the first hour, of your name being William Granville O’Grady. Nay, hear me out. I do not accuse you of any thing dishonourable in taking another name, circumstanced as you were. I gave my word to my brother, Ulick O’Connor, to receive you in my house—should you think fit to visit us—as a suitor to the daughter of O’Connor.’

“I looked him full in the face; a scornful and singular smile, or rather sneer, curled his short upper lip as I spoke, giving a most disagreeable expression to his otherwise handsome features.”

Mrs. Atherstone paused awhile, for much affliction had weakened her; and Sir Gerald was left a prey to tormenting apprehensions.

“I resume my story, though it tortures me. I told Mr. O’Grady that my brother had left his daughter free, so far that he solemnly declared he would never force her inclinations. ‘You have now,’ continued I, ‘had an opportunity of trying whether her affection is likely to be won by you. You declared your love for her yesterday, and she calmly and quietly told you she had bestowed her affections on one worthy of them, and that that must be a sufficient answer. She then left you, and she now declares she will not again subject herself to such importunities.’

“ ‘Well, upon my word, madam,’ interrupted Mr. O’Grady, ‘you are at least candid, and speak plainly. I *did* come under an assumed name, simply because I suspected an unjust—a most unjust—prejudice existed in your minds against the name of O’Grady. I am dispossessed of my rightful inheritance by an iniquitous will; and absurd and lying reports have been circulated, throwing a slur upon our name. Knowing this, madam, and that, no doubt, your niece was equally well acquainted

with these false rumours, I determined to try my fortune as a suitor for O'Connor's daughter, with her father's approbation, under an assumed name. I can now partly imagine how my incognito was discovered. I recollect a trifling incident that struck me at the time; however, let it be. You have spoken to me plainly and candidly enough, madam—I will be equally sincere with you. Use your influence, madam, with Aleen to accept me, and in return I will disclose a secret of infinite importance to you to learn.'

"'You are mistaken, Mr. O'Grady,' I replied, 'in supposing that any secret you could unfold would urge me to exert any influence over Aleen's affections. I will be even more candid, and tell you honestly, that your wishes would never have my consent or approbation.'

"'Well, madam,' returned he, 'I will not any longer intrude upon your hospitality; but, before we part, I may as well be explicit with you. William O'Grady never abandoned a project he once fixed his heart and mind upon. If I cannot have the hand of Aleen with her consent or yours, I must be content to take it how or when I can; but have it I will.'

"And with this insolent defiance, he abruptly departed, leaving me perfectly bewildered."

Sir Gerald sprang to his feet, and paced the room in a frenzy of rage.

"I see by your flushed face, Colonel," said Mrs. Atherstone, "and by your fierce gestures, that my recital has greatly agitated you. But I implore you to be calm, if possible. We must bear our trials. Hear me with patience. Careful thought, self-possession, and deliberate counsel are needful in our present calamity—passion will not aid us."

"I know it," returned our hero; "but who can appear to be at ease while suffering torture on the rack? I will try, however, to suppress my feelings, and listen attentively."

"Thank you," rejoined Mrs. Atherstone. "After some

consideration, I determined to keep to my own mind the parting words of Mr. O'Grady, and therefore merely told Aleen that I had come to an explanation with him, and that he had left the house in an angry mood.

" 'I trust in God,' said Aleen, 'that we shall never see him again.' "

" And so the matter dropped, though I felt very uneasy at the threat uttered by Mr. O'Grady. "

" What ensued ? " asked Sir Gerald, impatiently.

" Why, " replied Mrs. Atherstone, " the country, shortly after, became in a very troubled state. Factions were being formed all over the land. I had a great idea of leaving the country, and residing for a time in Dublin. But Aleen, who had no fear, declared the place was so lovely and tranquil, and the people in our vicinity so attached to us, that she could not bear the thought of leaving it and them, and that she was averse to the noise and bustle and gaiety of a city. I therefore abandoned that project. Alas ! how unfortunate was it that I did so ! Still I took precautions, and had some additional male domestics to sleep in the house. Time wore on ; all in our neighbourhood remained perfectly tranquil ; and, in the course of a few months, I lost nearly all recollection of Mr. O'Grady's threats. More than three quarters of a year had gone by since I had last seen that person, whose name we never mentioned. "

Having reached this part of her narrative, Mrs. Atherstone seemed unable to proceed. At length she summoned resolution.

" On one fatal night, " said she, " we had retired to rest somewhat later than usual. Aleen's apartments were in the south wing of the mansion, facing the bay, as she loved the view from her window beyond any other. We parted at my door—I kissed her, and bade her good night. The hour was late, for we had set up conversing on many topics, and, in truth, my dear friend, you were the principal subject of our conversation ; for Mrs. McMahon had sent us a published account of the famous

battle of Blenheim, in which your name was mentioned as having been the officer who rendered such effective assistance to the Prince of Hanover. The household was apparently still and in repose, and I had dismissed Mrs. Jenkins to her own chamber. I was not undressed, wishing to read a few pages of a work I was interested in, when a succession of shrieks reached my ear, petrifying me with fear and astonishment. A violent crash followed, and then the report of fire-arms. I rushed to my door: it was fastened without."

"Ha!" interrupted Sir Gerald, with a start, "was it so? Then there was a traitor amongst your own domestics."

"I thought so at first," replied Mrs. Atherstone, with a heavy sigh. But circumstances lead me to conjecture that I was bolted in by one of the ruffians themselves."

"But, my dear madam," urged Sir Gerald, "the interior of your mansion must have been well known to the villains, or, in so short a time, your chamber could not have been discovered."

"As I continue," observed Mrs. Atherstone, "you will see why I think I was bolted in by the robbers themselves. When I found I could not get from my chamber, my agony was inconceivable. I flew to the window, and threw it up. Alas! its height was above thirty feet from the ground, and the night was very dark. What availed my piercing cries for assistance? The village is more than a mile distant; and the nearest cottages of my tenants are nearly half a mile. Again I rushed to the door: it was opened, and the tall figure of a man, whose face was covered with a silk mask, and who had a white scarf round his shoulder and body, entered my apartment. I knew him in a moment. My heart, my fears, told me I beheld William O'Grady. 'Oh, cowardly villain!' I exclaimed. 'Where is my child? What is your purpose in committing this daring outrage?'

"'This outrage, madam,' replied O'Grady, removing

his mask and fixing his fierce eyes upon me, 'is the consequence of your own obstinacy ; you refused to exert yourself in my favour. Perhaps, now, you will accede to my terms. Know that Aleen is your own child, and not Ulick O'Connor's. To suit his own purpose, which I have no time to explain, he deceived you. If, therefore, Aleen was dear to you before, she ought to be doubly so now. Swear, then, to consent to my union with her, and I leave this house, and your daughter shall be restored to you. Refuse, and I follow my own plans.' "

"Consummate villain !" ejaculated Sir Gerald.

"I listened," resumed Mrs. Atherstone, "to this speech of O'Grady in mute amazement and horror, while a feeling of intense joy struggled amid the wild chaos of thoughts that whirled through my brain. Aleen, then, was my own beloved child ! I had always felt a mother's feelings for her : she clung to my heart with a strange tenacity. But I had no time to indulge in thoughts and feelings.

" 'Be quick, madam,' exclaimed O'Grady, 'Will you swear to—'

" 'Never,' interrupted I, 'will I consent to bestow my child upon such as you are. You dare not commit this outrage.'

" 'Dare not !' echoed he ; and with a fierce laugh he shook my grasp from his arm, and turned to quit the room. I rushed after him ; but the villain slammed the door in my face, striking me with violence on the forehead, and throwing me back insensible on the floor."

Sir Gerald was again unable to master his feelings. His face was flushed and his hands were clenched with fierce resentment ; while Mrs. Atherstone buried her face in her hands and wept passionately, as the painful recollection of that fatal hour was vividly recalled.

"I have little more to say, my dear friend," observed Mrs. Atherstone, after several minutes had passed.

"When I recovered from a long insensibility, I

learned that my child was gone. I felt some relief when I heard that O'Regan's daughter, Jessy, was carried off also, as it showed some regard to the feelings of my poor child. I need not describe to you my agony. I sent messengers every where; and a large party of my tennantry armed themselves and set out with the intention of tracking the abductors. Captain Stanmore, the commanding officer of a troop of Dragoons quartered in Tralee, immediately dispatched a lieutenant and twenty men to scour the country; for it is believed that the outrage was committed by a party of White Jacobites; but I believe they only wore the white scarfs to deceive. My own opinion was that they would attempt to carry Aleen to the continent, and there force her to become the wife of this William O'Grady. I see, Colonel, that you suffer great anguish of mind. It is the will of God to inflict this blow. We must yet trust to His mercy to relieve us. In my fall, singularly enough, I broke the small locket-case I wore round my neck, and a miniature fell from it. Mrs. Jenkins picked it up, for I had fainted. On recovering, I was, as you may suppose, astonished on recognizing a small portrait of myself, which she remembered was missed at the period of Aleen's birth. Besides the miniature, there was a folded paper, closely written over. She put them both aside, till I should be able to read the manuscript. After a time, I found it was a letter from my brother Ulick, explaining his reasons for the cruel act he had committed in depriving me of my child. The secret it contained had been already disclosed by O'Grady. Besides, from the moment you so abruptly questioned my brother as to Aleen's birth, the subject never left my mind. Many things that occurred at that, to me, most painful period, came fresh to my recollection; and, though I had no proof, still I felt satisfied that Aleen was my own child. Another time I will read you Ulick's letter. The deed he had perpetrated, was forced upon him by that bigoted priest, Father Ignatius, a Spaniard.

“‘Save its soul,’ whispered the priest; ‘let it not imbibe with its lips the seeds of heresy.’”

“At that time, Ulick, gloomy and stricken in mind and body, yielded to the priest’s wishes; and I was made to believe my child had died. My nurse, for gold, betrayed me. I was so near death myself, that I knew nothing of what passed at the time. The child was restored to me by Ulick himself, as I have already related to you. What his plans then were, or whether any compunctious feelings touched his heart or not, it is difficult to say. But even now, so bigoted is he, that he would, if Aleen could have been won from her first and only love, have sacrificed her happiness and mine by uniting her to a Roman-Catholic, although he must have known the man to be vicious and depraved.

“I now, my dear friend, feel rather fatigued, though cheered in heart by your arrival. The hour is late. Tomorrow morning, we will again converse on this subject, and decide what steps can be taken to restore Aleen to us both; for no obstacle now remains to prevent a union that would not only tend to my child’s felicity and my peace, but would also ensure her a protector able to shield her from further persecution.”

Gerald saw that Mrs. Atherstone was exhausted. After some expressions of his love for Aleen, and his deep gratitude to herself, he pressed the hand held out to him, and retired for the night, to ponder over plans to rescue Aleen from the hands of her persecutor.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN the meantime, gentle reader, what has become of our fair heroine, Aleen Atherstone? On that eventful night,

when she and her favourite attendant, Jessy O'Regan, were carried off, Aleen was reading, and her maid finishing some needle work, when they heard the first alarm given to the inmates of the mansion. Thunder-struck by the uproar, they stood for a moment bewildered. Suddenly, their door was burst open, and four men, with their faces blackened and white scarfs over their shoulders entered the room, led by a tall man, masked. Appalled at the sight. Aleen stood like a statue, pale as death, and gazed at the intruders; while Jessy, who was very timid, threw herself on the bed shrieking with terror.

"Take them both," said the tall man. "Wrap them in the mantles; but treat them gently, and bear them to the boat."

Then turning on his heel he left the room.

The sound of his voice was enough. Aleen at once recognised William O'Grady. Her natural spirit and firmness returned; and knowing how useless resistance would be against her abductors, she desired the men, who approached with the mantles, to leave her at liberty, and she would follow them. To this they would not consent; but enveloping her and the screaming and struggling Jessy in ample mantles, they bore them from the mansion without their having the power to see or hear what was going on in the house.

Though half stifled by the heavy folds of the mantle, and excessively alarmed Aleen did not lose her presence of mind. What would not her beloved aunt suffer? And what could be the object of O'Grady's daring outrage? These thoughts occupied her during her passage, supported by two men, to the beach. When placed in the boat, she heard one of the men say, as if addressing Jessy—

"Cry away, darlint. 'Twill clear your throat."

"It's chirping after its sweetheart," said another laughing.

"Oh, faix, she shall have plenty of sweethearts where

use's going," declared a third. "Wait till daylight, acushla, and maybe you'll take a liking to my own handsome face."

"Silence, there!" vociferated the voice of O'Grady; "and push the boat off."

Aleen felt the boat move, and then heard the fall of oars in the water. In a few minutes more, some one unfastened the mantle from about her head; and then she heard O'Grady say—

"You can remove the mantle, madam, if you find it inconvenient, and wish for fresh air."

Aleen quietly removed the cloak from her head and face; and, turning round, beheld O'Grady steering the boat, which was pulled by four men. Above a dozen men were in the boat besides.

In a cold, cutting tone, Aleen said, looking steadily into O'Grady's face—

"It did not require this outrage to convince me that Mr. O'Grady was a coward. I ask no mercy from you, sir; and scorn to solicit my liberty, even were it likely to be granted. But I know and feel that your projects will be defeated, and a bitter retribution fall upon your head."

Then folding the mantle round her person, Aleen, with a dignity and calmness which seemed to have an effect upon the rude and lawless men in the boat, turned from her persecutor, and tried to console poor Jessy.

"Well, madam," returned William O'Grady, in a careless, sneering tone, "I am rejoiced to see you take this affair so easily and calmly—I really admire firmness and decision in your charming sex; and as to your kind opinion of me, I must trust to time and attention to effect a change in that. Now, my men, pull away. I see the lights right before you."

Aleen cast a glance over the dark water, with a disconsolate feeling agitating her little heart. Though she inwardly trembled at the thought of being in the power of the lawless man, who had torn her from her home, she

vertheless, determined to show a bold and firm front meet the misfortune that had fallen upon her.

"Oh," she mentally exclaimed, "if my own Gerald is near! But alas! miles of land and sea separate us!" So, at least, she thought, not having received any intelligence of Colonel Granville's arrival in Ireland.

From these bitter reflections, she was roused by the at's running alongside a long, low craft, with tall taring spars raking over her stern. The vessel had not single sail set; for, up to that moment, not a breath wind disturbed the still water upon which The Warhawk tranquilly floated. A voice from the deck hailed the boat as it shot up alongside; and several lanterns were swung over her low bulwarks.

"All right, all right," exclaimed one of the men in the bow of the boat, as he laid hold with a boat-hook.

The oars were then laid in, and the boat rendered stationary, so that those in her might ascend. A ladder of few steps served to ascend; but Jessy, whose terror is very great, sobbed loudly as she was helped aboard one of the rough men.

Aleen refused the aid of William O'Grady, and, ascending easily enough of her own accord, stood upon the deck of the lugger, surrounded by the wild and lawless crew; while those in the boat scrambled up the side laughing and bantering each other.

"Well, my beauties," exclaimed one of the crew, holding his lantern so as to examine the faces of those coming aboard, "all alive and kicking. None of ye lost the amber of your mess?"

"No, old boy, sorra one," replied the new-comer. There wasn't as much powder burnt as would singe the whiskers of a cat. There's a breeze rising, and it's tter to get clear of the bay before daylight."

"Come, Mahony, don't let the men stand loitering," said William O'Grady. "A couple of small cutters are cruising off the mizen; but the brig is at anchor in Bantry, getting a new foretop-mast."

"Ay, ay, sir. We shall be under weigh in a jiffy when the breeze comes. She'll not care a curse for all the cutters afloat. So heave away, boys."

"Now, madam," said O'Grady, approaching Aleen, who stood silent and motionless, her heart beating painfully, while Jessy clung to her mistress's arm, "now, madam, will you follow me to the cabin?"

Glad to escape hearing the language and jokes of the men, Aleen and her attendant descended into the cabin of *The Warhawk*. It was a large and very handsome cabin, lighted by a safety-lamp suspended from the roof. Having shown them in, O'Grady stood for a moment with an uncertain expression on his features—some thought was evidently passing through his brain. However, he suddenly roused himself, and, simply saying—

"You may seek repose, madam. On my soul and honour, no living being shall molest you."

"Honour!" echoed Aleen, bitterly, and casting a look of reproach and disgust upon the features of O'Grady, who coloured to the very temples; but, without uttering a word, closing the door after him.

Aleen, then, with a heavy sigh, threw herself upon a couch, and, no longer able to resist the feeling of despair creeping over her, burst into a flood of tears. Jessy, one of the kindest-hearted of maidens, though excessively timid, no sooner beheld her mistress give way to grief, than she cast herself at her feet, forgetting her own sorrow and fear; and, taking her young mistress's hand, she repeatedly kissed it, imploring her not to fret, for God would help them, and punish those horrid wretches who had so cruelly torn them from their home.

"Oh," exclaimed she, "if the good Colonel and my own father were here, they would soon release us."

"Yes, Jessy," returned Aleen. "Would to God they were? But who can tell to what part of the world this terrible and wicked man may take us? Perhaps to France or Spain."

Jessy used all the arguments her kind but simple

nature dictated to console her mistress during the remainder of that miserable night. But when the dull grey light of early dawn struggled through the sky-light, both mistress and maid had fallen into a kind of troubled slumber.

In the meantime, the Warhawk, with a light breeze from the west, glided from the Bay of Kenmare; and just as the sun rose, she was running between the Island called the Dorses, and the point of Ballybay. William O'Grady was still upon deck, having merely wrapped himself in his mantle and stretched himself on the deck for an hour or two.

As they ran out from the sound, and opened the wide expanse of Bantry, he perceived a cutter, with a pennant flying at her mast head, standing into Bearhaven.—While looking at her with his glass, she suddenly altered her course; and shooting up in the wind, bent in stays, and, as soon as her sails filled on the other tack, she stood out so as to cross the lugger's course.

"Curse that fellow!" said O'Grady; "had we been an hour later, he would have been in Bearhaven. Now, though your papers are all right, it won't do to let him come near us with our present captives on board. We must give him a run of it."

"Faix, I'd cripple him with our long gun, sir," said Mahony; "or else he may lead us a dance to the coast of France. They say the two cutters sail well; but nothing to the brig."

"That would condemn the Warhawk from this out; firing upon a king's ship," returned O'Grady, "and as my father is still in danger somewhere on the coast, I do not like setting them at defiance yet. Keep her a point or two more to the southward, and let us see how that fellow sails. It certainly won't do to let him gain the least clue to the place of our retreat."

The sheets were slacked, and the Warhawk bore away to the southward and eastward. The cutter was not more than three miles from them, under her mainsail, jib,

and foresail, going free. The next moment her gaff topsail was hoisted. It was a nice sailing breeze; and after about an hour's progress, the crew of the lugger perceived that, if they pleased, they could run her out of sight. Still it would throw them greatly off their course; and, as the wind then was, make it impossible for them to reach their destination that night.

This pursuit, by the cutter, rendered O'Grady, who was already irritable, quite furious.

"Lower your mainsail, Mahony," said the commander of the Warhawk. Let that fellow creep up to us; and get our long gun ready. The water is so smooth, we ought to be able to knock their mast-head about their ears."

"That's the ticket, my lads," shouted Dennis Mahony to the lawless men aboard, every one of whom had forfeited his life ten times over to the laws of his country, and cared not a jot for consequences. Down went the main lug; and, hauling in the fore sheet, the lugger slackened her speed. The long gun of the Warhawk—a very formidable piece in those days—was run along her flush deck, and made ready to fire upon the advancing cutter, which, the moment she came within a mile, fired a gun, but not shotted.

"Now then, you Tim Murphy," said O'Grady, striking on the shoulder a weather-beaten, but regular-built old seaman, who had served as a quarter-master on board a man-of-war in William's reign, but was flogged and dismissed for irregular conduct and a mutinous spirit, "now, Tim, let us have a specimen of your skill. Splinter the cutter's mast-head the first shot, and I'll pay you five guineas."

"Hurrah, Tim my boy, now's your time."

Thrusting a huge quid of tobacco into his jaw, Tim Murphy took aim, saying—

"If I don't do it the first shot, I'll be —— but I'll do it the second."

The first shot struck the topmast of the cutter about

three feet above the mast-head, bringing down the gaff topsail. This daring act seemed utterly to amaze the crew of the cutter, for she at once shot up in the wind, firing her two guns at the lugger as she did so; but, except cutting away one of the Warhawk's back stays, the shot did no damage. The next instant the gun from the Warhawk pealed over the deep, and a loud cheer from her crew told the success of her shot; for down came the cutter's mainsail, and the mast-head was knocked to splinters.

"Now, then," said O'Grady, "hoist away, lads; his Majesty's cruiser will trouble us no more this day."

Under every stitch of canvas she could hoist, the Warhawk flew before the wind, leaving the cutter utterly unable to pursue her; for though some time after she made sail, and ran for Bantry, it was clear that in their crippled state it would be utterly useless to pursue such a craft as the Warhawk.

Aleen and her attendant Jessy were aroused from uneasy slumbers by some one knocking at the cabin door. Though startled, Jessy plucked up courage to rise and open it, when one of the men handed in a tray with coffee and other materials for breakfast. On the tray was a folded paper.

Greatly relieved at not being intruded upon by Mr. William O'Grady, Aleen took up the paper, and read the few lines it contained with a feeling of evident satisfaction, while Jessy, recovering her spirits, prepared the breakfast for her young mistress. The note, written with a pencil, was as follows:—

"You may rest perfectly satisfied, madam, that no injury or insult shall be offered to you. You will reach your destination before night. Till you are more composed I will not intrude my presence upon you.

"W. G. O'GRADY."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Aleen, as she finished read-

ing the above, "I shall not be taken from my own country, for if we are landed this night, it must be on the coast of Ireland."

Feeling thirsty and fatigued, she gladly partook of some coffee. Shortly after this, the report of the cannon from the cutter startled Aleen, and made her heart beat with hope.

"Oh, Jessy," she exclaimed, "we are doubtless pursued by some Government vessel."

Then followed the report of the gun from the Warhawk, and the heavy tramping of feet on the deck over their heads, which for twenty minutes kept our heroine in a state of intense and feverish anxiety. But shortly after came the sounds of loud laughter and merriment down through the skylight, which was slightly raised, and these sounds made her heart sink; for Aleen then knew they had baffled their pursuers, whoever they were.

All became quiet again. The slight heel over of the vessel, and the dash of the waves against the sides, proved to her they were going rapidly through the water with an increased breeze.

"Alas! Jessy," said Aleen, "our hopes were short-lived. We have nothing now to trust to but the mercy of Providence."

The day wore on; the Warhawk still went smoothly and easily through the sea, as the wind blew from off shore, having rounded the Mizen Head.

As the day declined a cold fowl and other articles were brought to them, the bearer coming no farther than the door. He was remarkably civil in his manner, requesting to know if there was anything the young lady would wish to have; to which Jessy replied that her mistress did not require any thing more.

"We must have run a very considerable distance, Jessy, since last night," observed Aleen. "God knows what part of the coast we may be landed on."

It was approaching sunset as the lugger drew in for the shore. The water was singularly calm, and Aleen,

shortly after, judged that they were coming to an anchor, for she could conjecture, by the noise above, and the creaking of the yards as they were lowered, that the lugger was either at anchor, or preparing to be so. Half-an-hour passed, and then a profound silence reigned upon deck.

A few minutes after, a knock at the cabin door announced to the captives that the time was come to quit the vessel. On opening the door, Dennis Mahony made his appearance, and in a quiet, civil tone, said—

“Will you please, miss, to come upon deck. The master and most of the crew have left the vessel, and I remain, with two others, to conduct you ashore. You needn’t be frightened, miss—you will be quite comfortable in the ould tower.”

Surprised at the civil tone and manner of the man, who, though in the attire of a smuggler and armed, had nothing either repelling or disagreeable in his appearance, Aleen simply replied she was ready, and, throwing on her mantle, she followed the man upon deck, feeling a great desire to have a view of the place they were to land on.

The sun had just set as she put her foot upon deck, and, for the climate and time of year, a glorious sunset it was. The sky was guiltless of a cloud, and a flood of golden light fell upon every object around. Not a soul was to be seen on board the Warhawk, but two men were in a boat alongside. Even in her deplorable situation, Aleen could not avoid remarking the exceeding neatness and regularity of everything on board the lugger. Her tall, tapering masts appeared scarcely to have any rigging to support them; the sails were furled into the smallest possible compass; every rope was coiled down in its place, and the deck was scrupulously neat. The lugger lay in a perfectly land-locked pool, scarcely more than half a mile in circumference; and the view was strictly confined to that half mile, for the pool of water was surrounded by piles of the most fantastic and singularly-

shaped rocks and cliffs, shutting out all view to seaward. On the land side the cliffs rose to the height of two hundred feet. One single spot alone showed a portion of sand, and that was very limited. Aleen was astonished at being unable to trace the outlet of this extraordinary inlet of the sea.

Dennis Mahony civilly aided the captives into the boat, where, to her own great surprise, and the bewilderment of Jessy, Aleen beheld one of her own large travelling leather trunks, or portmanteaus.

The boat was now pushed from the side of the Warhawk, which lay as if asleep upon the tranquil water, undisturbed by even a breath of wind. The boat was run upon the little shingly beach, and a plank enabled Aleen and Jessy to land. As they did so, Aleen perceived a female descending a singular zig-zag path in the cliff, and approaching the boat. Pleased to see one of her own sex, Aleen looked attentively at her as she entered into conversation with the man, who seemed, from his manner and hers, to be her husband. After a moment's conversation with Dennis Mahony, the woman came close to Aleen, and dropping a curtsey, with rather a curious expression of countenance, as her peering eyes ran over the face and person of our heroine, she said—

“Will you follow me, miss? The men will bring up your trunk by-and-by.”

This woman was Brady Mahony. One look satisfied Aleen that from her nothing was to be gained; therefore she merely said—

“Lead on, and we will follow you.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Mrs. BRADY MAHONY was at this time about forty-three years old, and still a very good-looking woman, though far from having, except when she pleased, a pleasant expression of countenance.

With another glance at the face and beautiful figure of Aleen Atherstone, Brady led the way up the curious, steep path leading to the summit of the cliff. It was narrow and very rough; but cut into steps to render the ascent somewhat less difficult. Having gained the top, Aleen paused; and, though the daylight was fast fading, she looked round her with extreme surprise. The first object that caught her attention was one of those strange round towers still to be seen in Ireland—a riddle and a mystery for *savans*. This, she guessed, was to be her abode. The view from the spot, she stood on, full two hundred feet above the deep pool in which lay The Warhawk, was a strange and singular one. She was able to look across all the islands that lay between her and the broad sea; and, far out in the deep waters, were numerous other islands, forming a kind of promontory. The one she was standing on, had a very limited level on its summit; and thus she could discern that the basin of water below communicated by a very narrow outlet not only with the sea, but with a creek that seemed to run some miles inland.

It at once struck Aleen that the far out islands were those forming Cape Clear. In Atherstone Hall was an immense and singular old chart of the south-west of Ireland—the work of a worthy pastor who lived in the preceding century, and who was then the private chaplain to the Atherstone family.

Brady Mahony, with a sneering tone, said—

"You seem to know where you are miss; but it would be a long time before any one would look for you here."

"Providence is everywhere," returned Aleen calmly.

The woman turned away, saying—

"Please to follow me, miss; this tower is where you are to live." And, with a hasty kind of manner, she threw open the door, and passed in first. Aleen and her attendant followed into the first floor of the tower—a room evidently intended for a kitchen, to judge by the articles against the walls and on the shelves. A spiral staircase led to the upper apartments, one of which Aleen perceived was fitted up, no doubt, for her reception; for new matting was on the floor; the rough walls were covered with pieces of old tapestry; and there were a few chairs and tables, together with a shelf containing several books.

A small door led from this chamber up another flight of stone steps, into their sleeping-room. It was evident that the windows had been recently enlarged, for the immense thickness of the walls left the previous holes, intended for light, truly dismal.

The woman lighted a candle, and, placing it on the table, said she would prepare some supper for the young lady as soon possible.

"If you could give me some tea," said Aleen, "I would thank you."

"Tea," repeated the woman. "Oh, yes, miss, you can have plenty of that. I will make you some at once."

Aleen sat down, while poor Jessy stood, the image of perplexity, gazing at the small and scantily furnished chamber, which her young mistress was to inhabit. The coal fire that blazed in the wide grate gave it, however, a certain air of comfort. While Aleen sat sadly busy with her thoughts, Dennis Mahony and his wife brought up her trunk, telling Jessy that she would find in it many articles her mistress would want, only they would require arrangement, as they were tossed in in a hurry, and without much regard to regularity

As soon as the husband and wife retired, Jessy opened the trunk, and Aleen was glad to perceive; amongst a heap of articles hastily collected and thrown in, several things that would be most useful.

In less than an hour supper and tea was brought up; and Mrs. Mahony, having asked if the young lady required anything else, took her leave, locking the door of the chamber.

"A very useless ceremony," observed Aleen, with a sigh, and a tear stealing down her cheek. "Assuredly," added she, "we should never think of attempting to wander out on this forlorn island."

Having taken some tea and little other nourishment, Aleen and her maid ascended to their sleeping chamber, which was as comfortably arranged as circumstances would allow. Dejected and weary, both mistress and maid were glad to bury their melancholy thoughts in sleep if they could.

Let us now conduct our readers into a singular range of caverns, situated almost under the old tower itself. In these subterranean places were assembled, a night or two after Aleen's arrival at the tower, eighteen or twenty men. The vault they were in was of great extent, the entrance to which was extremely difficult of access. Along the sides, were piles of barrels and casks, numerous chests holding goods of all kinds, immense quantities of ropes, anchors, grapnels, and boxes of blue lights. In fact, all kinds of articles used by smugglers in carrying on their unlawful traffic, were here stored. In the middle of the cavern was a rude kind of table, formed by three stout planks, supported on four empty casks on their ends. The same articles served for benches. All kinds of eatables were scattered over the table, and two kegs of whiskey, and one of water, served for quenching the thirst. Clumsy, but large, horns did duty as goblets. Though the eatables were coarse, and the drink only whiskey, a more jovial crew seldom met together, to enjoy the few hours of the night. They were a fierce

set. Two or three Spaniards and a Dutchman, the skipper of a smart dogger, formed part of the company.

Even while thus enjoying themselves, they kept their heavy pistols in their broad, untanned belts, and their cutlasses also. As far as appearances went, they certainly looked quite capable of undertaking any kind of adventure, whether in plundering private individuals or his majesty's revenue.

They were in the height of their fun, all applied themselves to the whiskey keg; but they considered any admixture of water destructive to good liquor. Now and then a boisterous song called forth a shout of applause.

While the gang of smugglers were holding their revels in the large outward cavern, two individuals were seated before a table in an inner recess, much smaller, but more comfortable in appearance. The sides were hung with straw matting; the sandy floor was covered with heaps of dried rushes; while, in a naturally-formed cavity, blazed a wood fire, the smoke from which found its way through a cleft in the rock. A good oak table, and two or three strong oak chairs added comfort to the chamber; and in the furthest corner were two beds, raised from the ground by strong wooden frames. Altogether, the place had a look of snugness about it, and was a place of shelter not to be despised, especially by the two reckless individuals occupying it.

Mr. O'Grady, senior, and his son William were the two individuals seated at the table. A large pie, and a ham—some cold fowls, and a tongue, were spread upon the table. Several bottles of wine, a large jug of hot water, and a couple of flasks of Hollands, stood beside them.

The uproar from the outer cavern came, at times, rather distinctly upon their ears, disturbing their conversation. The elder O'Grady cursed their boisterous glee; he seemed in a moody, fretful temper; and, contrary to his habits and usual custom, drank little.

"You are very low to-night, father," said William O'Grady, pushing aside the wine and mixing himself a strong potation of Hollands and hot water. "Take a tumbler of this mixture, sir. It is far better adapted to this rather damp residence than even the best wine. I see no cause for such a depression of spirits."

"You do not," said the elder O'Grady, almost savagely, and casting a glance round the chamber. "You call it nothing to be driven like a fox into this cursed hole for shelter. My mind is distressed and troubled."

"Some people," rejoined the son, sipping his mixture and kicking a large log on the fire, "some people drink to drown care."

"I do not," returned his father. "You must not imagine that, at my time of life, I can look upon things with the same stoical indifference that you can. Driven to shelter in such a haunt as this—baffled, after years of labour, in every thing—some confounded *contre temps* always occurs when I am on the very point of succeeding in my projects."

"I cannot see that affairs stand so bad at present," observed the son. "I have not indeed heard how you came off with the leaders of the Jacobite faction. But I have heard it's all up with them."

"Yes; curse the cause and them too," said Mr. O'Grady, bitterly. "I have had sufficient to sicken me. Never was there a better time for effecting a landing in Scotland than the period selected; and the opportunity was thrown away. However, it's now quite useless going over what has passed, and is beyond remedy. I had to fly for my life. Ulick O'Connor had a very narrow escape; for he fell into their hands when the Salisbury was taken. But, by some means, he effected his liberation, and returned to France. I fled into this country; but was again nearly captured. Feeling extremely anxious to join you—for no tidings of your proceedings reached me—I was forced to lie hid in the county of Wexford. The pursuit after the fugitive Jacobites was

very hot and persevering. With difficulty and danger, I contrived to reach our old haunts on the coast, and found several of my former associates busy at the accustomed trade. There I learned you were at Kenmare, or Atherstone Hall; and that Sir Gerald Granville was expected at Granville Castle. At this time, the white Jacobites, as they styled themselves, were making a stir in the south. I knew one or two of the leaders of this faction; and was anxious to know what force they had, in case you required aid to carry out your plans. I contrived to attend one of the meetings at the old Abbey, near the Mucross creek; but, to my surprise, I found that these men were only taking the name of White Jacobites to mislead, and then I found out your connection with them."

William O'Grady laughed, saying—

"Yes; that was a ruse of mine."

"I then came here," continued the elder O'Grady, "to wait till I heard from you. At the same time, I sent a couple of men, on whom I could depend, to watch the arrival of Colonel Granville. But again my plans were baffled by the troop of dragoons quartered at Tralee; for, to my great consternation, I find it has transpired that I am hiding somewhere in this county; and worse, my real name is discovered. It is now known that O'Grady and Fenwick are the same person."

"Ha! that is indeed bad," ejaculated the son, looking with some alarm in his father's face. "I was not aware that you knew that. Such a discovery you must allow is ruinous."

"Yes," returned the elder O'Grady, bitterly. "We can no longer face the world, even if we succeed in getting the Granville estates."

"Confound it, father," said William O'Grady, with a laugh; "you surely do not call Great Britain the world. It is part of it, certainly; but a deuced deal the worst part, in my mind. Let me but succeed in my present enterprise, in which I see no chance of failure, and we

shall find plenty of room in the world to enjoy ourselves, besides these foggy islands of his majesty's."

Mr. O'Grady looked thoughtful and dejected; but, suddenly brightening up, he said—

"Well, William, perhaps you are right. At all events, mix me a tumbler of Hollands. This place is damp; but it's lucky, after all, that you never had a hand in this confounded Jacobite plot. You are safe enough, and can claim the estate without any risk, provided we can remove him who really has no right to them."

Consoling himself with this reflection, Mr. O'Grady stirred his tumbler and drank half its contents. Then, seeing that his son did not speak, he looked up and perceived that William O'Grady's features were troubled.

"What are you thinking of now, William?" asked the father. "You are looking rather serious."

"Well, sir," replied the son, in a solemn tone, "I must tell you now, once for all, that I will not engage in any scheme against my cousin Gerald's life."

Mr. O'Grady turned pale, and in a voice trembling with rage, said—

"How is this? Does such squeamishness arise from this new love-affair of yours? Has your conscience grown so tender?"

"There is no need of mockery, father," returned the son, calmly. "You are well aware, much as I disliked my cousin in my early years, owing to that feeling being instilled into me from my cradle, I never did, nor never will plot against his life. When I fitted up the Warhawk as a schooner, and was near succeeding in getting him off to the West Indies, you know I stipulated that he should be released the moment we secured the eighty thousand pounds, and got as much out of the estates as we could besides."

"It is a pity, William," interrupted the father, fiercely, "that I did not make a priest of you."

"I never had a wish to be a priest, sir," retorted William O'Grady. "There are as good and virtuous

men who are priests, as any in the world. But I will show you that bantering on this subject is folly ; for any further projects against either the life or the estates of Sir Gerald Granville, would be absolute madness."

The elder O'Grady breathed hard ; but merely said—

"Go on ; I am listening."

"In the first place, father," resumed William O'Grady, "you are discovered to be the same Fenwick who was concerned in the conspiracy against King William. That fact alone will, for ever, prevent your appearing openly in the British dominions. Then, again, even if Sir Gerald Granville were dead, there is another claimant to these estates ; for in the late Sir Hugh Granville's will, you know there is a clause providing for the appearance of one supposed dead or lost. I mean Gerald's elder brother, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice."

Mr. O'Grady nearly dropped the tumbler he was raising to his lips—turning, at the same, fearfully pale.

William O'Grady paused ; and then said, in a kind tone—

"Indeed, father, you ought to be pleased that this Cuthbert Fitzmaurice did not perish."

The elder O'Grady seemed to be stricken speechless ; so utterly amazed did he feel at the words used by his son.

"How is this William, ? You are dealing in mysteries," at length broke from his lips, in a trembling disjointed manner. "Cuthbert Fitzmaurice was left in a vessel by that woman, Brady, after the vessel struck on a reef of rocks ; and she and her husband swore that the craft went down."

"They swore falsely, father," replied William O'Grady ; "and now it is as I have stated. The vessel did *not* go down ; and that man, now, commands the gun-brig on this coast—the very man who has for years been watching to arrest you."

There was no compunction in the heart of Mr. O'Grady ; for, with a horrid oath, he struck the table fiercely, saying—

"Curse him, and all the brood of the Fitzmaurices together. But explain this; for you are driving me mad, William,"

William O'Grady gave the required explanation; to which his father listened with his lips pressed hard, and his hands clenched in passion.

"Oh!" exclaimed he, "what a cursed fool I was, not to have fired the building with my own hand, and thus consigned them all to eternity."

William O'Grady gazed, with a melancholy expression, at the now flushed face of his sire. Wayward, wild and ungovernable in temper and disposition, William yet possessed human feelings in his heart.

As the elder O'Grady paused after his savage burst of passion, and leaned his head upon his hand, William said—

"You see, father, there are many obstacles in the way of pursuing your plans. Now, my present is quite practicable, and will injure no one; for not only are you debarred from again showing yourself in his Majesty's dominions, but so am I."

"You!" exclaimed the elder O'Grady, looking up, "you are in no way committed."

"Pardon me," returned William, taking from his pocket a couple of letters. "Read these: they are important."

Mr. O'Grady took the letters with a puzzled look; opened one which was directed, "The Honourable Mrs. Atherstone, Atherstone Hall, Kenmare, County Kerry." He then looked at the signature; and with a dark frown and an oath, read the word "Briefless." "Curse that meddling lawyer!" he muttered, and then perused the following:—

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"I am happy to hear that you approve of the arrangements I have made with respect to the outlay of the money lodged with Paterson.

and Co. At your request, I give you the result of my enquiries, besides facts known to myself concerning that misguided and notorious conspirator O'Grady, so long known as Fenwick. I feel extremely uneasy at your permitting his son to enter your house. Though, perhaps, not as criminal as his father, yet it is now clearly ascertained that for years he has been leagued with the smugglers on the south and west coast of Ireland, and was captain of the celebrated lugger, *The Warhawk*, which he purchased for a yacht, and which, no doubt, will again be used as a smuggling craft. Get rid of him, my dear madam, as soon as you can, and be strictly on your guard; for depend on it he is plotting mischief. He is now also known as the man who shot Lieutenant Simmons in the affray near Timoleague, some years ago; and a large reward is offered for his apprehension."

"What a lying old rascal this lawyer is!" exclaimed Mr. O'Grady furiously. "I heard you say it was Mahony that shot this Lieutenant Simmons, and that you strove to prevent him."

"Such was the case," replied William O'Grady; "but, never mind, go on. Finish that and read the other."

Mr. O'Grady pitched the lawyer's letter into the fire, and opened the other, saying—

"This, I see, is from Captain Stanmore, the Commander of the Dragoons at Tralee, and is also directed to Mrs. Atherstone."

He then read as follows:—

"MADAM,

"Every attention shall be paid to your request. At the same time, permit me to express my sincere regret and sorrow that such an audacious outrage should have taken place. I have sent Lieutenant O'Reilly and a score of men to pursue the villains; and am confident they will be tracked, as the father of this William O'Grady is known to be hiding somewhere

in this county. There is a report that one of the King's cutters, under the orders of Captain Morris, who commands the Gun Brig in Bantry Bay, came in last night disabled; having been fired upon by the notorious lugger, The Warhawk, off Bantry Bay, the very morning after the abduction of Miss Atherstone. Lieutenant Lewis, who commands the cutter, was severely hurt by a splinter. I have also heard that the brig will put to sea in pursuit; so that if Miss Atherstone has been carried off by sea, every effort will be made to rescue her.

"Trusting that I soon may be enabled to relieve your mind from the dreadful anxiety you must be suffering—

"I remain, madam,

"Your obedient servant,

"G. H. STANMORE."

"This is infinitely worse than I could have anticipated," said Mr. O'Grady gloomily. "What could have induced you to fire upon that cutter when it was so essential to our safety, to keep the lugger free from suspicion?"

"She would never be free from that, sir," returned William, "when once it became known that O'Grady and Fenwick were one and the same person. Besides, I was not only anxious, as Miss Atherstone was on board, but knowing you were somewhere on the coast, I was desirous to gain this place; and had I not crippled the cutter, I could not have attempted to reach in for the Cove; for though we outsailed her, still I should have been forced many leagues out of my course, and much valuable time would have been lost in regaining my destination; and before I could do so, this gun-brig would probably be out to sea. After I have completed my present project, I intend never to return to this coast with The Warhawk, but fit her out as a schooner in some Spanish port, and sail for America."

"And do you imagine, William, that you will be able

to induce, or force this girl to marry you? And will you be able, even in such an event, to persuade her mother to bestow her large fortune upon you? You will find yourself mistaken; and this rash adventure may lead possibly to our ruin. I will risk my life no longer by remaining on this coast. How did you obtain those letters?"

"Simply by stopping the couriers," returned the son.

"Oh, then Mrs. Atherstone is ignorant of their contents. What a valuable booty you lost by taking the girl and leaving the plate and jewels."

"What!" exclaimed William O'Grady with a flush on his cheek, "what! turn a common robber! No! not an article of value was touched in the house. But you mistake my project altogether. I confess, when I saw this beautiful and high-spirited girl, I was struck with her loveliness and fascination of manner; and if I could have gained her love—. But," he added impatiently, "let us not talk of that. In a moment of passion, I threatened what I would not do now for all the wealth in Europe. I know Aleen Atherstone too well; she would not fear to die; but she would never become mine. Besides, I was acting basely in thinking of her as a wife. Moreover I changed my plan. I can gain my purpose without making that beautiful girl miserable for ever."

The elder O'Grady rubbed his eyes, and looked into his son's face with a mystified look.

"It is late now, father," resumed the young man; "and I must put a stop to those noisy fellows without. You require rest. We are quite safe here; besides, we have Tendersink's sloop in Mucross Creek; all her papers are right. So lie down, father, and take a few hours' rest; and to-morrow I will let you into the particulars of my project. At all events, your life shall not be risked."

So saying, William O'Grady rose up, and went into the outward cavern. Half an hour afterwards a profound silence reigned throughout the entire range of vaults.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FOUR days had now passed since Aleen had become a captive in the lonely tower of Clara Island. During this period, she remained perfectly undisturbed by the presence of any person, excepting the woman, Brady Mahony. Still, the four days wore away slowly and most painfully to Aleen; for her thoughts were sorely troubled. She was perpetually thinking of her aunt's sufferings at her abduction, and of the fearful uncertainty she herself was under as to the designs and projects of William O'Grady. Oftentimes her imagination rested upon her absent lover, whose image was ever present in her mind.

During the day, she sometimes occupied herself in gazing out from the narrow and deeply embedded window of her chamber over the islands and upon the broad sea beyond, dotted with innumerable islets and rocks. As she thus gazed, she often hoped to descry some vessel steering in amid the islands, hoping it might be in pursuit of her. The third day, as the Warhawk was not to be seen beneath her window, Aleen supposed that vessel had either put to sea, or gone into another anchorage. Some of the books she found in the tower also served to wile away the tedious hours. Thus time passed; but no ship or boat approached the place of her solitary confinement. In the far distance, she frequently distinguished the white sails and dark hulls of many a craft as they bore away, east or west, or doubled the Cape at a cautious distance. Tears would then roll down her cheek as her thoughts flew to the happy home from which she had so rudely been torn.

Jessy said and did all her kind heart could think of to cheer her mistress; but Jessy was sad, also, though she had no lover to sigh after. Brady Mahony attended to their wants, sulkily enough, at times; but there was an

air of discontent about the woman's looks and manner that prevented the captives from requesting any favour at her hands.

The sixth day of their confinement was wearing away, when the door of their chamber was opened, and without any previous notice, William O'Grady entered the room. Aleen was sitting, as usual, with a book in her hand, gazing out from the window upon the sparkling waters, when a faint exclamation from Jessy caused her to turn round; for, so absorbed were her thoughts, that she paid no attention to the opening of the door. As she looked up, she beheld William O'Grady. At first, she felt her cheek grow pale, and her limbs tremble; but her natural spirit returned, and she met the fixed glance of her persecutor without quailing.

"Madam," said William O'Grady, in a quiet, subdued tone, "if you will favour me with half-an-hour's conversation, it may lead to your immediate restoration to your home. At the same time—I entreat you to believe me—no compulsion will be employed by me to induce you to comply with the proposal I shall make: you can refuse without the slightest fear of any harshness on my part. Still, if you consult your own happiness, and the happiness of one much dearer to you than you imagine, you will see the policy of accepting the proposition I shall make."

William O'Grady paused; while Aleen, who had listened in almost breathless silence, hesitated a moment before she replied. But after an instant's reflection, she made up her mind how to act; and, in a tone as calm and collected as O'Grady's, replied—

"Situating, sir, as I am, necessity compels me to comply with your request."

Telling Jessy, who stood bewildered, to retire to the room above till she summoned her, Aleen then requested O'Grady to relieve her mind from the uncertainty she felt with respect to the proposal he had to make.

For a moment or so, William O'Grady stood leaning

against the heavy buttress of the door, seemingly in deep thought. Suddenly rousing himself, he said—

“I thank you, Miss Atherstone, for acceding to my request. I will be as brief as possible; and, after stating a few particulars with respect to my motives for the act I have committed against you, come at once to the point. You are, no doubt, aware that my father married the eldest daughter of the late Sir Vrance Granville. As his only son, I was consequently the heir direct to the Granville title and estates. By an especial grant from King William, Sir Hugh Granville was permitted to will the title and estates to my cousin Gerald Fitzmaurice, he taking the name of Granville. This was an arbitrary and unjust act, for, by it, I was disinherited. Our family can boast of a far longer pedigree than that of the soldier of fortune who won his rank with his sword. We, therefore, considered it right to regain our inheritance, if we could.”

“Sir,” exclaimed Aleen Atherstone, with a flushed cheek, but a firm, collected tone,—“it would have been an inheritance regained by fraud and violence; for you seem to forget that when the noble Sir Hugh Granville obtained that grant from King William for his services, he considered his nephew, Gerald Granville, the only heir to the property in existence; and when, afterwards—”

“Nay, madam,” hastily interrupted O’Grady, with a slight increase of colour, “we will wave all recrimination on this painful subject; for, much as you seem to know of the past, you may be yet ignorant that the Granville estates in Ireland were first won by the massacre of its original possessors, the Desmonds. But no more on this subject; I will now speak on that which will most interest you. When I first visited Atherstone Hall, under an assumed name, it was certainly with the hope of winning your love. You need not turn pale, lady; for I very soon did justice to your noble and true nature; and though, in my passion and resentment, I said you should

be mine, I really never intended to carry into effect such a determination,"

Aleen drew a long breath, as if a mighty load was raised from her heart. O'Grady easily read what was passing in the mind of his captive.

"On certain conditions," resumed he, after a slight pause, "I will restore you forthwith to your home, and even to your lover. But that you may justly appreciate the offer I am about make, I will disclose a secret that will cause your heart to beat with a feeling unknown to it."

Aleen raised her eyes, and let them rest with an anxious look upon the countenance of William O'Grady. The words of Gerald to Ulick O'Connor vibrated afresh in her ears. Could it be that the fond wish of her heart was about to be realized?

"You have always," continued O'Grady, "considered Ulick O'Connor to be your father. Your mother's name was never mentioned to you. Learn now from me that Ulick O'Connor is in reality only your uncle, and that Mrs. Atherstone is your mother. To suit some projects in which your uncle was engaged, Mrs. Atherstone was led to suppose that her child died at its birth. Hereafter, you will learn the particulars."

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed Aleen, with clasped hands, and eyes filled with tears, "my mother, my own, fond, devoted mother!"

And giving way to a feeling she could not control, she burst into a flood of tears.

William O'Grady allowed his captive time to recover from the emotion she experienced on this much wished for, but startling intelligence. Many an hour had she spent dreaming over this secret wish of her heart. The love she cherished for Mrs. Atherstone was always that of a fond and devoted child; and now she knew her to be her mother! no obstacle could ever more exist between her and her noble lover. Oh, there was joy in that young heart, captive as she was, and, as yet, in the power of Gerald's bitterest enemy.

"Now, Miss Atherstone," said O'Grady, "listen to me calmly and attentively. I have torn you from a mother's arms. I will restore you to them; but, at the same time, I cannot forego the hopes of years without a struggle. Let Sir Gerald Granville keep, undisturbed, his estates. I covet them no longer. He will have wealth beyond his most boundless wishes. I have heard that the attainder against the Fitzmaurice estates has been reversed in his favour; the property of my cousin will accordingly be immense. Let him, therefore, agree to make over to me the sum of eighty thousand pounds left him by his uncle Sir Hugh Granville, and, at once, I will restore you to your family, and then quit this country and my lawless associates for ever, to seek in another land a better name and fairer fortune."

A slight noise at the door attracted the attention of William O'Grady. He paused, but all remained perfectly still.

"Are those the terms you propose for my release?" anxiously demanded Aleen. "Surely, surely, there is no need of applying to Sir Gerald Granville. My own fortune, I have been told, is equal to the sum you mention, and my beloved mother will joyfully yield that sum."

"Nay, lady," hastily interrupted O'Grady, "that must not be. I have no claim on you or yours. I consider myself justified in employing a ruse to gain an equivalent for the property I have unjustly been deprived of. The surrender of that sum will be as nothing to my cousin in comparison to the treasure he will gain in you."

Aleen, with her face highly flushed, and her manner greatly agitated, said—

"The terms for my release must, of course, come from you to Sir Gerald Granville. In what way can I become a party in this affair?"

"Simply, Miss Atherstone, by stating in a letter to Sir Gerald the facts of the case, and your desire to be restored to your home. In fact, lady, your own heart will dictate to you what to say. When I have that letter, I will per-

form the rest. In one day your letter will reach its destination."

"How! What mean you?" exclaimed Aleen, with a beating heart.

"Sir Gerald Granville is by this time at Atherstone Hall, having been in Ireland some few days previously," replied O'Grady.

Aleen's eyes sparkled with a joy she could not and did not attempt to conceal.

"I will write at once," she hastily said.

"I am rejoiced you have so determined," said William O'Grady, with a look of satisfaction. "Be so kind as to give the letter, as soon as written, to the woman who attends you; for the sooner this affair is brought to a conclusion, the better for all parties."

And with a very respectful salutation O'Grady left the chamber.

During this interview Mrs. Brady Mahony, for reasons of her own, was a most attentive listener. She had taken off her shoes, and creeping softly up the stone steps, which returned no sounds whatever, she had the luck, on reaching the door, to find it not quite closed. In her intense anxiety to hear she touched the door, thus causing the slight noise that attracted the attention of William O'Grady. She remained long enough to understand the whole of his project with respect to Aleen; and then, with a malignant expression of feature, she muttered a low execration in Irish, and retired to her room.

When at night Mrs. Mahony received the letter from Aleen to convey to William O'Grady, she carefully locked the door of the tower, and passing over the limited space on which stood the building, she descended the steep path to the beach. Two men were putting oars and other articles into a small boat. As Brady approached, William O'Grady came up to her and took the letter; then telling her to be attentive to her charge in the tower, he entered the boat, which pulled away rapidly from the beach.

Brady Mahony stood looking after the boat till it dis-

appeared round an angle of rock jutting out into the pool, and apparently blocking up all outlet from the basin.

"Bannath Lath to you, William O'Grady!" she exclaimed, shaking her clenched hand after the boat. "So, you want to cast us off like old clothes, now you have no further need of us. But wait a while—maybe you'll find us as 'cute as yourself."

Then turning round, she clambered over a range of rock, and arriving at the entrance to the caverns, she felt her way in till a strong glare of light fell upon her path, and then she heard men's voices. In a few moments she reached the inner cave, whence came the sound.

"Ah! Brady, my jewel, acushla macree, is it you at this time of night?" said her husband; who, perched on the top of a cask, with his legs stretched upon another, and his back against the side of the cave, was composedly puffing away at a short pipe. Directly opposite him, reclining on three stout planks, was another individual, smoking a huge Dutch pipe. Near them was a jar of whisky and drinking cans.

Dennis Mahony's companion was the Dutch captain, Tendersink—a man of great bulk, deep-chested, with big bones, sinews and muscles. His face matched his frame; the jaws looked as if wrought in iron; and the arched, shaggy brow, dilated nostrils, and compressed lips, indicated passion and power.

"Come, sit ye down, my good little vrow," said the Dutchman, half rising and making room for Brady beside him. "You have got something to say, der teufel, I know you have. I fear de young man play us false."

"Dhoul!" fiercely exclaimed Mahony, clenching his hand. "I have suspected both father and son some time back; but, Morga, let him take care! After fifteen years' service—"

"Why, what you tink, Dennis?" asked the Dutch skipper, interrupting the flow of Dennis's eloquence. "Let de good vrow speak."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Mahony, very quietly helping

herself to a mug of her husband's mixture, "he's going to sell the girl in the tower to his cousin, and then lave us to shift for ourselves."

"Ha!" breathed the Dutchman from his deep chest. "Mine Gott! how much he get for de leetle vrow?"

"Eighty thousand pounds," answered Brady.

"Eighty thousand teufels!" almost roared the Dutch smuggler. "Gott d—! Eighty thousand pounds sterling for von leetle girl. I would sell all de vrows in Holland for half that sum. One leetle girl for eighty thousand pound! Donner and blitzen! it is what one whole cargo come to."

The skipper could no longer struggle with such astounding intelligence, but endeavoured to calm his amazement by puffing his pipe furiously.

"So, that's it, is it?" said Dennis Mahony, after a pause, during which Brady related all the conversation she had heard. "Now, be my sowl," continued he, "we will have two words to that bargain—he has not got the girl yet. He cannot be back before to-morrow night. Now I say, Tendersink, we must get these two girls to your sloop to-night."

"*Two* vrows, did you say?" demanded the Dutchman, opening his large eyes. "Mine Gott! that is double."

"Tut," interrupted Mahony, impatiently; "you have smoked yourself stupid. Don't you understand?"

"Eh, yes; mine Gott, I understand two leetle vrows to take aboard my good Vrow Caterine. But where we get de boat? We can swim—but de leetle vrows? My sloop is ten miles off. Donner and blitzen! eighty thousand teufels!"

And he rubbed his huge hands, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and sat bolt upright.

"He is right enough," said Brady to her husband; "we have no boat."

"Ye are a pair of omadauns," returned Mahony, impatiently; "do you think me one not to know that we can't get from the island without a boat? I settled with Pa-

trick and Dermot to return after landing Mr. William up the creek, instead of going on to Mucross. I knew, latterly, the master has been plotting to desert us, as he did old Darby and his wife at Kilgobbin, without sharing the booty we have helped, at the risk of our necks, to gain."

"Hark! mine Gott! what's that noise?" ejaculated the Dutchman. "Ten thousand teufels! it's the fall of oars—it's de boat come back!"

"Dhoul!" exclaimed Mahony; "it cannot be the boat. Listen! Extinguish the light, Brady; I'll go to the entrance and see."

"Donner and blitzen! what's in de vind, now, vrow? But stop till I see de priming in mine pistols is goot. Ah! very goot. Douse the glim now, vrow."

Dennis reached the mouth of the cave, and then looked forth on the still waters. It was a calm, and not very dark night; and to one accustomed to use his eyes oftener after the sun sets than before, objects were tolerably distinct even at some distance. The noise of the oars as they smote the water in a short, quick stroke, was audible enough; and as Mahony gazed towards the opening into the pool, he perceived, turning the point of rock that partly blocked the entrance from seaward, a long boat full of men, urged forward by six oars.

"By jabers, we are betrayed!" muttered Mahony to the Dutchman, who was close beside him. "That is a man-of-war's boat. Follow me, and we shall have the girl yet. Curse them!"

"Very goot; I'm your man. Der teufel! it's getting hot."

Both men, followed by Brady, gained the entrance to the tower by the secret path, even before the strange boat's keel grated upon the shingle below.

"Now, mind what I say," observed Dennis, entering the lower chamber of the Tower, and taking two large boat-cloaks from a peg. "We have a desperate game to play; and there must be no bungling. The girls are not

yet in bed. I heard them above, and I saw a light in the lower room. Those in the boat will be some time finding the way up round the rock. We can carry the girls down the steep path. Now, Tendersink, mind, we must stop their cries. Throw your mantle over one of the girls, and I'll do the same with the other. Now, Brady, lead the way into the room."

"Ten thousand teufels! how shall we get away with the frauleins, eh?"

"Never you mind," replied Mahony; "do as I tell you. It's all up with up if you don't."

Brady Mahony unlocked the door; and before the horror-stricken captives could utter a cry, the two men rushed in, and completely enveloped them in the mantles. They were then hurried from the Tower. Just as they gained the secret path to the caverns, the sound of voices at a little distance from the other side of the rock, accelerated their movements. In the unrelaxing grasp of the two smugglers, the half-stifled women were quite incapable of uttering a cry.

After a troublesome and hazardous descent, they reached the outward cavern; and then Dennis Mahony, concealing himself behind some projecting crags, gazed down upon the beach below him. Turning to the Dutchman, he said in a low voice—

"Listen to me, Captain Tendersink, and mind what I say. Just as I suspected, they have left only two men to guard the boat. Therefore, with caution, we cannot fail of success. Take your heavy pistol in your right hand. The men will not perceive us till we are quite close to the boat. Knock your man over with the butt of your pistol; but, except in case of necessity, avoid firing. We must gain time to shove off without alarming the others, who are, no doubt, searching the Tower. Now, Brady, avick, keep close to me in case those man-of-war chaps have pistols, which is likely."

The Dutchman merely gave a grunt of acquiescence in Dennis Mahony's plans; and then they cautiously

descended the path, and, before they could be discerned by the two men, who were stretched upon the thwarts enjoying a quiet nap, were close to the boat, which was hauled up a little on the shingle. Nevertheless, just as the smugglers reached the side of the boat, the sleepers started up, cutlass in hand, shouting—

“Hillo, there! Who are you?”

The next moment, a blow from the butt of a pistol tumbled the nearest sailor out. The other, however, made a cut with his cutlass at Dennis Mahony, who, with a savage oath, feeling a sharp gash in his neck, fired his pistol in the sailor's face. The man fell back over the gunnel of the boat into the shallow water beside.

“Ten thousand devils! You have settled his hash,” said the Dutchman, depositing his burden in the boat. And then Mahony, getting in, put his shoulder to the stern and shoved off.

“Der teufel! I tink the young vrow's dead,” said the Dutchman. “Don't stir.”

“Pull away,” responded Mahony. “That fellow hit me hard. They have heard the shot, and it won't be long before they are here. Never heed the women, man. They have fainted, perhaps. So much the better.”

It was young flood, and the boat soon floated. So seizing an oar each, they rowed lustily. The two men they had wounded were struggling up from the shallow water, while, at the same time, loud shouts were heard from those above them on the cliffs. But Dennis Mahony and the Dutch skipper cared little either for the shouts of their pursuers, or the threats and execrations hurled after them by the exasperated sailors, who at last arrived at the beach.

But the boat was now beyond their reach; for though the long, heavy, eight-oared boat pulled slowly with only two oars, it had got too far from the shore to be laid hold of by the men belonging to it, some of whom threw themselves into the water, but were forced to wade back,

enraged at the situation in which they were left on a small island, without any possible way of getting off, that night at least.

CHAPTER XXXV.

WE must now make a slight retrogression.

It has been premised that the gun-brig, stationed at Bantry, with two cutters under her orders, was commanded by Captain Cuthbert Morris. The Government were extremely anxious to capture, if possible, several notorious Jacobite leaders known to be concealed somewhere on the west and south-west coasts of Ireland, waiting for an opportunity of escaping to the Continent in any of the contraband vessels perpetually running their cargoes on, as O'Grady was also suspected to be somewhere on the coast; and as Captain Morris had already commanded a vessel in the Irish Sea, he was despatched with a ten-gun brig and two cutters to keep a strict guard on the coast, from the Old Head of Kinsale to the Kenmare river.

Captain Morris, as might be imagined, had been extremely anxious to discover his parentage; but, after a long lapse of time, despaired of ascertaining any trace of his origin. He had made several efforts to obtain particulars respecting the Dutch galliote, by writing to the port she hailed from; but all he could learn was, that a sloop of that description had sailed many years previously for the port of Waterford, and that neither the vessel nor her crew had been heard of from the period in question. Captain Morris felt satisfied he was of Irish extraction; his nurse's name was Brady; that was decidedly Irish. He now determined to make some fur-

ther inquiries, and even put a paragraph in several of the newspapers, which might lead to some clue.

In the meantime, he kept a vigilant watch on the coast, and had several excellent and trustworthy pilots on board; moreover, the two lieutenants who commanded the two cutters, were two very efficient officers. It was not without considerable surprise that he learned that his old antagonist, The Warhawk, had been converted into a yacht, and purchased by Sir William Granville O'Grady; but he did not then know that Sir William was no other than the once famous Captain of The Warhawk. Before he sailed from Plymouth, he received instructions to seize upon The Warhawk, wherever he might find her, and also Mr. William O'Grady, who was no other than the notorious smuggler, William Fenwick, and who was said to have shot Lieutenant Simmons some years before, in a struggle which ensued in seizing a cargo landed near Timoleague.

Captain Morris's brig was one of the fastest vessels in the service; and, as he had been twice baffled by The Warhawk, when commanding The William and Mary cutter, he became excessively anxious to capture that famous lugger, which he had positive information was still on the coast.

Cruizing one day off the harbour of Glandore, a violent squall, sudden and almost unforeseen, took him aback; and before it terminated, he sprung his fore-topmast so badly, as to force him to run into the harbour for a temporary refit.

Whilst at anchor there, the beauty of the woods bordering the Miros river, and the noble mansions of Granville Castle and Glandore Abbey, attracted his attention. He had on board an old pilot belonging to the port, and, wishing to know who owned the two mansions he saw so delightfully situated, he called the old man to come on the quarter-deck.

"Who resides in the mansion on the left?" demanded he.

"That, your honour, just peeping out of the Miros woods, has not been inhabited these many years. It did belong to the good ould stock of the Fitzmaurices; but they fought for King James: and they say the ould property belongs to the crown now; more's the pity, your honour."

"And that castellated mansion to the right?" questioned Captain Morris.

"Oh! that's a Fitzmaurice also, your honour; only his honour Sir Gerald has taken the name of Granville a'cause of being left his uncle's property. The Lord bless him! he's a noble gentleman, and is coming home from foreign parts. It's a sad story, your honour," continued the old pilot, drinking the glass of grog the captain ordered him, "I remember it as if it was yesterday, when the ould Baronet was murdered in that very house by a set of villains and robbers, and no one has ever found them out. Sir Gerald Granville's mother died of fright. The villains came in a Dutch sloop."

"A Dutch sloop!" exclaimed Captain Morris, getting interested in the old man's garrulity.

"Yes, your honour, a Dutch sloop. I was one of the men as put to sea that night; for, your honour, they stole away with them the eldest son of Mr. Fitzmaurice, of Glandore."

"Good God!" ejaculated Captain Morris, in an agitated tone, and with a flushed cheek. "You are interesting me much. How many years ago was it since this crime was committed?"

"How many years ago? Let me think. Why, captain, it's nigh twenty-five years."

"And how old was the child?"

The old pilot looked up into the face of Captain Morris with an earnest gaze.

"Master Cuthbert Fitzmaurice," replied he, "was about four years old when those rapparees carried him and his nurse off in the Dutch sloop."

For several moments Captain Morris actually shook

with emotion; for thus, after a lapse of twenty-five years, by the merest chance was a clue gained that appeared without a doubt to substantiate his origin.

"One question more, my good fellow," said Captain Morris. "Do you remember the name of the nurse who was taken away from yonder mansion with the boy?"

"Oh! sure, your honour, there's many a one now in yonder village remembers her. A likely lass she was. Brady Sullivan was her name. She married some wild fellow that left her, and then she came back and was nurse to the boy as was stole. But Brady Sullivan she was always called."

Captain Morris was completely astounded. The dates, the Dutch sloop, the name of Cuthbert, all bore such evident reference to his early childhood, and his rescue from the Dutch galliote, that he felt firmly convinced he had discovered his parentage, and that, in Sir Gerald Granville, he should find a brother.

Not wishing, at that moment, to create surmise or excite curiosity among his crew, by the remarks which the pilot would undoubtedly make, he contented himself with taking the man's name; and, giving him another glass of grog, dismissed him. In the evening he went ashore, and proceeded to walk round Granville Castle. He was subsequently shown over the mansion by the old butler, a man who had lived in the service of the late Sir Hugh Granville.

More and more convinced, from his casual conversation with the worthy butler, that he had discovered the clue to his birth, so long and so ardently desired, he returned on board with a light heart, resolved, as soon as he could conveniently do so, to have an interview with Sir Gerald Granville himself. The next morning he sailed for Bantry, where he replaced his sprung topmast. Here he received intelligence of the abduction of Miss Atherstone.

The evening after, just as he was preparing for sea, one of his cutters came in crippled, with the information that she had chased the Warhawk off the mouth of the bay; but

her mast-head being struck with a heavy shot, she was completely disabled from pursuing the lugger, which, the lieutenant declared, was evidently making for some part of the coast. In half-an-hour after, the brig was standing out of the bay, with a fine breeze from the westward. The cutter was ordered, as soon as she could repair damages, to put to sea, and keep a sharp look-out to the westward of the Kenmare river, while the captain himself ran down the coast towards Cape Clear.

Unfortunately, as Captain Morris thought, he was suddenly becalmed during the night, and in the morning the brig was lying quite still, without an air of wind, scarcely a mile from Three Castle Head.

"This is a strange calm, Mr. Haultight," said Captain Morris, sweeping the horizon with his glass.

"It looks infinitely more like a heavy gale of wind, to judge both by the sky and the state of the atmosphere," returned the lieutenant. "This heavy ground-swell is fast setting us in for the land. Suppose we get the boats out, and reach a better offing."

"There's a six-oared whale-boat pulling round the Head towards us, sir," said a young mid, who had gone aloft for a look-out. "She's just coming out now, sir, from under the shade of the Head."

Both commander and lieutenant turned their glasses in the direction of the Head, and soon made out a long whale-boat under six oars, pulling evidently for them.

"I see two persons sitting in the stern-sheets," said Lieutenant Haultight; "and, by Jove, here's a cat's-paw coming over the water from the south'ard."

As he spoke, one of those flaws of wind, which the sailors call cat's-paws, lifted the heavy sails of the brig, filled them, and urged the vessel on for an instant, and then fell stark calm again.

"Ah!" said a pilot standing by the helmsman, "we shall have more than we can stagger under before night."

"Here is some intelligence for us," said Captain Morris; "there is a gentleman in a military undress sitting

in the stern, steering; the other is in plain clothes, probably an attendant."

"Here, boy, put the ropes and ladder over the side," said the lieutenant, "she will be alongside in a moment. How fast those whale-boats pull."

"They are very fast, and very fine sea-boats," observed Captain Morris; "I prefer them infinitely to a gig. I see the Cork pilots are using them very much."

As the Captain spoke, the whale-boat shot up alongside, and he moved forward to receive the distinguished individual, who the next minute stood upon the deck of the brig."

"Captain Morris, I presume," said Sir Gerald Granville, looking with evident surprise into the handsome features of the Commander. "My name is Granville."

Captain Morris could hardly restrain his emotion. Dennis O'Regan, who had accompanied his master on board, stared from one to the other of the two young men with a kind of bewildered amazement, rubbing the back of his head violently, as was his custom when puzzled. }

"You will excuse me detaining you a few minutes," said Colonel Granville. "I followed you out from the bay, hearing from a fishing-boat that you were becalmed, and hoping to overtake you, which, luckily, I have accomplished. We have obtained positive information that Miss Atherstone has been carried off by sea."

"Will you do me the honour, Sir Gerald," said Captain Morris, in an agitated tone and manner, "of accompanying me to the cabin."

Colonel Granville bowed, and, with strange thoughts struggling through his brain, followed Captain Morris.

No sooner did O'Regan see them disappear down the companion, than he turned round and said to the lieutenant—

"By the immortal powers this bates all! Please sir, what's the captain of this ship's Christian name?"

"Well, my good fellow, I'll oblige you in that request,"

good-naturedly replied the lieutenant; "his Christian name is Cuthbert—Cuthbert Morris."

"Be gorra, I knew it! Cuthbert Fitzmaurice, that's his name, or by jabers mine's not Dennis O'Regan—and I would like to see the chap as would say that to my face," exclaimed O'Regan, with an energy that startled the worthy lieutenant, who knew that some mystery was attached to his commander's birth. Catching Dennis by the arm, he said—

"What the deuce makes you add a Fitz to our captain's name, eh?"

"What makes me?" echoed Dennis. "Be me sowl, I've good reason. Did you see that gentleman that went down into the cabin with him, eh?"

"I did, and was struck with the great likeness between him and our commander," replied the lieutenant.

"Ha! ha! Be the powers, there's no mistake. He's found this time, old boy!" And in the excitement of the moment, he hit the lieutenant a slap on the back, to the great horror and amazement of several of the crew, on witnessing such an indignity inflicted on their lieutenant. But Mr. Haultight, though somewhat driven out of his equilibrium by the energy of O'Regan's manner, was far too interested in the matter to mind trifles.

Before the lieutenant could reply, or ask the question on his lips, the voice of Sir Gerald Granville, calling on O'Regan to descend, caused that worthy to exclaim—

"Ha! by St. Patrick, I'm right!" and down the companion stairs plunged he, in such haste and heedlessness, and not being very steady on his legs in a vessel, that he entered the cabin of the brig like a thunderbolt.

As soon as he regained his perpendicular, which he did with a smothered anathema against all crafts that walk the waters, his master said—

"Here is a strange discovery, Dennis, and a happy one. You will be able, even better than I, to satisfy the scruples of this gentleman, who, thank God, I firmly believe to be my long lost brother, Cuthbert Fitzmaurice."

We will not weary our readers, at this concluding part of our narrative, with recapulations of incidents and events. It will be quite sufficient to say that Sir Gerald Granville and Dennis, after comparing all the dates and circumstances which Cuthbert Morris could lay before them, coupled with Dennis's own reminiscences, were satisfied that, in the commander of the brig, they beheld the lost Cuthbert Fitzmaurice.

"If we could only lay hold, your honour," said Dennis, highly elated, "of that rascal Mahony, or Phalim O'Toole—as he wanted to style himself—and, also, of his blessed better-half, Mrs. Brady Sullivan, we should be all right."

"We must collect all the proofs we can, Cuthbert, to satisfy the law," said Sir Gerald, pressing his brother's hand. "For myself, I need no further testimony. Nature spoke in my heart the moment I beheld you."

The voice of Mr. Haultight now interrupted the brothers—

"Here's a heavy breeze from the nor-east, sir : and the men in the boat are uneasy."

As he spoke, the breeze heeled the brig over on her side. Sir Gerald hastily wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper, folded, and sealed it, and directed it to Mrs. Atherstone.

"Now, Dennis, give this to the men," said he ; "and this, also," handing him five guineas. "Tell them to send that letter on at once, when they get to Bantry."

"I will stand in the smooth water under the Head," observed the lieutenant, speaking down the sky-light ; "and then cast off the boat. It will save them a heavy pull."

"Do so, Mr. Haultight," returned the commander ; while Dennis hastened up with the letter.

The two brothers seemed so overjoyed at the strange and most unexpected discovery of their relationship, that even the Colonel, for the moment, almost forgot the object of his visit to the brig.

"At all events, Cuthbert," said Sir Gerald, after a long and interesting conversation, "there will be no one to oppose your succession to the Fitzmaurice estates; for the attainder is reversed in my favour."

"You have a noble, generous heart, Gerald," replied Cuthbert Fitzmaurice as we shall henceforth call him and I glory ten thousand times more in calling you brother, than in the succession to all the estates in his majesty's dominions. But now, dear Gerald, let us talk over this most unfortunate affair of the abduction of Miss Atherstone—on whose recovery, I know, depends the whole happiness of your life. Have you gained any recent information concerning the retreat of O'Grady and his son?"

"Something I have certainly learned," answered Colonel Granville; "and that, is that the notorious smuggling lugger, the Warhawk, in which William O'Grady carried off Miss Atherstone, is concealed in some deep inlet on the coast; and that he intends, after getting his father on board, to sail for the coast of Spain. I have searched every creek between Kenmare and Black Castle; and I now wish you to keep a strict guard on this coast, while I search, with a boat's crew, the inlets that lie concealed by the Islands of Cape Clear. I am told there are several singular creeks, of which the entrances are concealed by rocks and islands. It is not improbable that this lugger may be at anchor behind some of those islands."

"Those are the very inlets and creeks I now intend searching," said the commander of the brig. With infinite difficulty, I have succeeded in getting a couple of pilots well acquainted with the locks and shoals along the coast. Two or three years ago, I chased that very Warhawk from the Mizen Head to the Old Head, in a tolerably fast cutter; but lost her in a heavy gale and a dense fog, off the Old Head at Kinsale. And, by Jove, I heard afterwards that this desperate smuggler actually landed a valuable cargo that very night—a deuce of a night it

was—within a league of the place I lost sight of him in.”

“There is a suspicious sail to windward, sir,” said Mr. Haultight, through the open skylight. “I think it is the Warhawk.”

The brothers sprang to their feet; and, with simply a pressure of the hand, hurried on deck. Lieutenant Haultight handed the glass to his commander, saying—

“There away, sir. She has a staggering breeze, and is going away south and by west.”

“A three-masted lugger. See her quite plain, sir.” sung out a young mid from the mast-head.

The commander looked several moments through the glass at the distant sail; and then, handing the telescope to his brother, said—

“There’s not a doubt of it. That’s the Warhawk.”

Colonel Granville felt no little agitation as he turned the glass upon the vessel in which he felt satisfied was his beloved Aleen. He gazed long and earnestly through the glass at the lugger, which rapidly came nearer; for the brig was standing right across her course. She was under her three lugs, without a single reef in them, though the breeze was heavy, and the brig had taken in a reef in both topsails. As Sir Gerald looked through the glass, she suddenly altered her course, hauling home her sheets and getting thus upon a wind.

“Ha, by Jove,” exclaimed Mr. Haultight, “she sees us!” Then turning to his commander, he said—

“We can carry our top-gallant sails over our reefed topsails; for I feel satisfied we shall have some very heavy squalls out of that black, dense sky to windward.”

“I agree with you,” returned Captain Fitzmaurice. “At all events, let us see how we hold him. Unfortunately, he is full three miles to windward; and we have only four hours daylight to come.”

Sir Gerald Granville was in a state of intense anxiety; he knew enough of the sea to know that to capture a vessel three miles to windward, and that vessel, perhaps,

nearly as fast as the pursuer, would be a tedious and prolonged chase. Moreover, during the night, she might entirely escape them. The agony of mind this thought caused him, was quite perceptible to his brother, who at once said—

“You are uneasy, dear Gerald. But do not be so. This is a remarkably fast vessel; and if we have to follow him to the coast of France, we will have him. Half an hour, however, will show our respective speed; and it is quite impossible he can carry that press of canvass on a wind in this rapidly-increasing gale.”

All now on board the brig were in a great state of excitement; the squalls were heavy and required great attention, lowering and hoisting the top-gallant sails as the force of the squalls required.

“We evidently gain upon the lugger,” said the lieutenant of the brig, “especially during the heavy squalls which force her to lower her main sail. She has also taken in a reef in her fore lug. Ha! stand by there,” vociferated he, “tacks and sheets. Here’s a tremendous squall coming over the sea like a race-horse.”

Colonel Granville, who had his eyes fixed upon the lugger, suddenly beheld her enveloped in a sea of mist. The tops of the waves seized by the squall, and hurled along like a snow-drift, completely hid her from sight.

Being skilfully handled, the brig, though she bent with the tremendous violence of the squall till her yards dipped in the foaming sea, yet gracefully and easily recovered herself, throwing a cloud of spray from her bows as she again dashed through the breaking seas with renewed speed.

“The Warhawk has carried away her foremast, sir,” shouted one of the men aloft.

“Ah, by Jove!” exclaimed Captain Fitzmaurice, in a joyful tone, “we have her, Gerald.”

The fury of the squall being spent, up went top-gallant sails; the next moment the yards were squared; and the brig dashed before the gale. The Warhawk was then

scudding under her main lug and mizen; while it was evident to those on board the brig that they were coming rapidly up with her. They were not now more than a mile and a-half from each other, when Captain Fitzmaurice ordered one of his bow chasers to be fired. No sooner had the sound of the gun died away, than a wreath of smoke rushed out from The Warhawk's deck.

"Ha! confound the fellow's impudence!" ejaculated Mr. Haultight, as the shot from the lugger's swivel twelve-pounder cut away one of the topsail ties. The damage was instantly repaired.

In another half hour, they were within less than a mile; and then the brig opened fire upon the lugger to cripple her. When shooting up in the wind, they saw she had contrived to get up a short jury mast on which they set a large shoulder-of-mutton sail; and hauling her sheets flat, she got upon her favourite point of sailing on a wind. The brig was soon after her; but, to their great surprise, the lugger appeared to sail under her reduced canvas faster than ever.

Again the brig kept away a point or two, and opened fire upon the lugger, knocking away her mizen mast altogether. The Warhawk, however, determined to hold on to the last; for she daringly returned the brig's fire, cutting away the fore-topsail sheets, and casting the sail loose.

Sir Gerald Granville watched these proceedings with intense anxiety. He perceived now that the squalls had ceased, and it blew a steady gale, that they did not gain an inch on the lugger; and another shot from The Warhawk splintered the brig's foreyard, which so enraged Mr. Haultight that, watching his opportunity, he fired his whole broadside into the lugger. This settled the chase: the lugger's mainmast fell over the side, and a loud cheer from the brig's crew testified their satisfaction.

Even under this terrible misfortune, The Warhawk showed no signs of surrender; for again her heavy swivel sent its contents on board the brig, completely smashing

her fore-topsail-yard, besides cutting away the starboard sheet of the main-top-sail. The next moment, she had hoisted a square-sail on her jury-foremast, and was running dead before the wind.

Enraged at the audacity and determination of the crew of *The Warhawk*, Captain Fitzmaurice, though he disliked taking life if he could avoid it, poured another broadside into the lugger, then not five hundred yards distant. This discharge left her lying on the stormy sea without a mast or spar standing. The brig was then hove to; and though it was blowing a smart gale, and the sea in much commotion, the long boat was got over the side, into which Colonel Granville got, in an extremely excited state of mind. Lieutenant Haultight and ten well-armed men followed; and then they pulled for the lugger. On ascending the side, they perceived that there were but three or four men on deck; and they stood, with savage looks and dogged unconcern, grouped forward.

"So," said Lieutenant Haultight, as he and Colonel Granville sprang upon deck, "you have made a pretty mess of this firing on, and injuring a king's ship! Do you know you'll swing from a yard-arm for this?"

"Swing, and be ——" said a tall, fierce-looking smuggler, as he pitched his cutlass overboard. "It's easy to brag with only fourteen men on board. By Heaven, if all our crew was here, no king's ship afloat should ever have taken us."

"Well, you rascal, you're taken now. So send the rest of the men upon deck," returned the lieutenant, angrily.

"Send them up yourself," retorted the man, with a scowl.

While this short dialogue was passing, Colonel Granville, whose anxiety was intense, followed by O'Regan, descended the cabin stairs, expecting to find, if not his beloved Aleen, at least the two O'Gradys. As he went down, heavy groans and moans reached his ear. Startled and alarmed, the Colonel entered the cabin. As he did

so, he paused, and looked with painful surprise upon the scene presented to his view.

The cabin of the lugger was lighted by a large, handsome lamp that swung to and fro with the heavy rolling of the mastless vessel. It was now dusk; for the chase had continued during several hours. Stretched on a mattress, upon the floor, lay a man apparently dying from a gun-shot wound. The other persons, evidently of the crew of the lugger, were kneeling beside the wounded man, endeavouring to staunch the blood that flowed from a wound in the side. As Colonel Granville entered, the sufferer looked up with a painful effort, and, for a single instant, his eyes rested upon the face of Sir Gerald. With a deep groan of anguish, he closed his eyes, and tried to turn aside. His head then fell back upon the mattress.

Struck by the countenance of the wounded man, his look of agony, as his eyes met his, and his attire, so different from the lawless men beside him, the Colonel, in a moment, guessed that the sufferer before him was the misguided and guilty O'Grady. The two men looked up: one of them, in a rough, reckless tone, said—

"If you want to have a chance of hanging him, you had better send a surgeon on board. There are others wounded."

"Hail the brig for the surgeon, O'Regan," said the Colonel, not heeding the rough and insolent manner of the smuggler. Despite O'Grady's errors and crimes a feeling of compassion for his dying relative took possession of Gerald's heart. Approaching, he said to the sailor who had just spoken—

"How is this, my man? Answer me civilly, for you will get nothing by roughness. Has this gentleman been struck by a ball from the brig?"

Somewhat awed by the look and manner of the Colonel, the man replied—

"No, sir; a splinter from the mainmast—the last shot fired—made this gash in his side."

And with a smothered curse, he muttered something, the exact meaning of which the Colonel could not make out. But the word "woman" caught his ear.

"Is there a lady on board this craft?" demanded Gerald Granville. "I will do my best to save you all from punishment; but answer me truly."

"No, sir," answered the man more civilly; "there is no female on board."

'Good God!' exclaimed the Colonel, "where can they have carried her."

Just then, Mr. Haultight put his head into the cabin, saying—

"The surgeon is coming, Colonel. Three men are severely hurt on board. Will you return to the brig? I find the object of your search is not here; but the wounded person before you is the identical Fenwick, whom we were so anxious to capture. We shall rig up some spars."

"I shall stay where I am," said the Colonel, looking at the miserable O'Grady, who hearing the words of the lieutenant, moaned and groaned in anguish.

Sir Gerald ordered O'Regan to try and be of service to the wretched sufferer, and bathe his face with water, for he appeared to have fainted. In a few minutes, the surgeon entered the cabin, and, on examining the wound, pronounced it to be mortal, and that O'Grady would not live beyond a few hours.

Touched by his situation, and truly miserable concerning the fate of Aleen, Colonel Granville ascended upon deck.

The lugger was under weigh—Mr. Haultight having got up two temporary spars. Most of her crew had been taken on board the brig; and Mr. Haultight, with a dozen seamen, sent by Captain Fitzmaurice, was running the lugger in for Bantry Bay. The night was intensely dark, and the gale violent, with a cross tumbling sea. The lights of the brig, which led the way, were perceptible; but not a vestige of anything else was to be seen on the troubled waves which broke in foam around them.

"This is a very fine boat, Colonel Granville" said Mr.

Haultight, who was quite ignorant of the relationship that existed between Mr. O'Grady and Sir Gerald. "If we had not completely crippled her by that last shot, she would have escaped us during the night. We have made a most important capture."

"He will scarcely live till morning!" said our hero, whose mind was too pre-occupied to heed the lieutenant's observations.

Just then, the surgeon came up, and hearing voices, joined the companions, saying to Colonel Granville—

"The wounded gentleman—for gentleman he evidently is—earnestly desires to see you, Sir Gerald. He has something important to communicate; and he knows he cannot live beyond an hour or so."

Most anxious to learn, if possible, where Miss Atherstone was concealed, and what William O'Grady's projects were with respect to her—and prepared to sacrifice any amount of fortune to rescue her, Colonel Granville descended to the cabin, where he found the kind-hearted O'Regan propping up O'Grady with pillows, administering to him a cordial which the surgeon had brought with him, and, in his honest and straightforward manner, soothing the unfortunate man, whose agony of mind and body seemed intolerable.

As Sir Gerald approached the mattress on which Mr. O'Grady reclined, he addressed him with much kindness of manner and considerable emotion, saying that he would do anything he could to ease his mind; but at the same time, implored him to say where his son had concealed Miss Atherstone.

O'Grady let his gaze rest for a moment upon the features of Colonel Granville, while, with a feeble hand, he wiped the perspiration from his pallid brow.

"I little deserve, Sir Gerald Granville," said O'Grady, in a low tremulous voice, "words of kindness from you, whom I have pursued from childhood with bitter hate." He paused a moment, drank a glass of cordial, and then continued:—

"I have neither strength nor time," said he, "to go into details of the past. I am guilty of much, perhaps not of all, laid to my charge. In my last moments, I must prevent further evil. The young lady my son carried off from Atherstone Hall, is safe and uninjured; neither did my son intend to harm her in any way. His intention was to hold her in security, and concealed from you, till you consented to ransom her at a great sacrifice. Considering himself as the child of the eldest daughter of Sir Vrance Granville, his purpose was to gain possession of the eighty thousand pounds left you by your uncle, Sir Hugh; and then leave this country for ever."

"It is needless to say, Mr. O'Grady," replied Colonel Granville, seeing the sufferer lean back exhausted, "that I was always willing, and stated so to my solicitor, who communicated the same to yours, to settle a very handsome property on your son; and, even at the time he committed this last outrage, was still willing to do so. But every advance of mine was met with scorn and contempt."

Mr. O'Grady moaned bitterly; and, gaining a little strength, said—

"I know all that, Colonel Granville; and how noble and generous was your nature. But haunted through life by the idea that the Granville estates should, by right, be my son's, were it not for a royal grant, I became determined to possess them at all risks. But I am dying! Oh, my son!"

"I pledge you my word," said Sir Gerald, in a voice of much emotion, "I pledge you my sacred word, if it will ease your mind with respect to your son, I will never—if he restores Miss Atherstone alive and unharmed—pursue him with any feeling of revenge. On the contrary, I will put him in possession of ample means of living in other lands, where he may, I trust, become a wiser and a better man."

For several moments the dying father buried his face in his hands. O'Regan shed tears, and muttered various

sentences to himself, as he wiped the brow, and moistened the lips of the penitent O'Grady, who, looking up, pressed O'Regan's hand, saying—

"This worthy man has eased my mind greatly. Thank God, Sir Gerald's brother lives by a strange and merciful decree of Providence. From him, I may say, I received my death wound. The name of the Dutch galliot he was found in was the Hohengolien. With respect to Miss Atherstone, she is now held prisoner in a tower on one of the islands near Cape Clear. You will easily distinguish the island by its lofty tower. Brady Sullivan, or rather Mahony, has the charge of her. From her, Sir Gerald, you will gain important information concerning your brother's abduction. She can fully prove his birth and rights. In my last hour, I here solemnly declare I did not fire the shot that slew Sir Vrance Granville."

A violent spasm shook the frame of O'Grady. He held forth his hand and looked imploringly into the Colonel's face.

Gerald Granville knelt beside him, pressed his clammy hands, assured him he forgave him, and would protect his son; and prayed fervently by his side.

In another moment, the guilty O'Grady ceased to exist.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

It was scarcely more than two hours after dawn before the brig was again under weigh, having left the lugger under charge of an officer and ten men—the smugglers were secured. Little rest did either Colonel Granville or his brother take during the few hours the brig remained at anchor in Bantry Bay.

The death of O'Grady, guilty of so many crimes, was still, to a certain degree, a painful event. Connected, by marriage, with the Granville and Fitzmaurice families, it was their intention, if possible, not to expose his iniquities to public censure, now that he could sin no more. They determined, therefore, to have him privately buried in the old cemetery attached to the Abbey of ———, where many of his name and race had been interred before him.

With the crew of the smuggler, they knew not well what to do. The firing upon a king's ship, though no lives were lost, was a grave offence against the laws. Still, concerned as their relative was with them, it was painful to their generous nature to hand them over to the rigour of the law. The capture of the lugger and the death of O'Grady would completely disperse the gang.

Deeply anxious to release Aleen from her captivity, Colonel Granville could not rest till they got under weigh for Cape Clear. The wind had shifted and blew from the north, which retarded their progress, as they had to double Dunmanus Head. They then stood along the coast for Cape Clear. But the wind fell, so that night had set in before the tower on the island could be seen; and the place being notorious for shoals and reefs of sunken rocks, the brig was hove to, and the long boat got out.

Colonel Granville, his brother, and half a dozen well-armed men, embarked; and, guided by an experienced pilot, pulled in amongst the islands. It was rather a dark night; and without a pilot well acquainted with the locality, it would have been impossible to get through the sunken reefs. Passing between several of the islands, the eye, getting accustomed to the obscurity, began to distinguish objects more distinctly.

"I can see," said Colonel Granville, "the dark outlines of a tower on yonder high land. That must be Tower Island, or, as it is called, Clara Island."

"Yes your honour," said the pilot, who heard these

words, "that is the one; but there is an island between us and Tower Island, which is a very lofty one. The little bay inside is sheltered from every wind, by this island and the other without."

"I have no doubt," observed Captain Fitzmaurice, "that the lugger lay concealed in some of the creeks in the vicinity, which are numerous and extremely difficult of access, except at the top of spring tides. I was twice on this coast, intending to examine them; but every time heavy gales on the spring tides, and heavy seas, prevented me."

"They seldom run for these inlets, your honour," remarked the pilot, "except during spring tides; for though plenty of water is in the creeks, their entrance is only possible in the high springs."

They had now pulled round, and ran into the little bay before Tower Island.

Colonel Granville felt his heart beat with anxiety as the boat's keel touched the strand. The cliffs appeared high and beetling. Leaving a couple of men to keep the boat afloat, they commenced searching for a path to the summit.

It was at that period that Dennis Mahony and his associate—the Dutch skipper, Tendersink—rushed up the secret track and carried off, as related, Aleen and her maid Jessy. After groping about for a little while, one of the men found the path usually taken to reach the tower. Up this they all went, and soon reached the front of the building. Just then the report of Mahony's pistol reached their ears.

"By Jove, some of the smugglers are below," said Captain Fitzmaurice with a start. "I will go back with two or three of the men, while you, Gerald, force the door of the tower. The rascals may overpower our men in the boat, and seize her."

Extremely alarmed, Gerald Granville and O'Regan put their shoulders to the door and burst it open. All was silent. O'Regan struck a light, and rushing through the room on the ground floor, they perceived the stairs lead-

ing to the upper rooms. Anticipating evil from the perfect stillness around them, Colonel Granville rushed up stairs, pushed open the door, and entered Aleen's former place of confinement. With a distracted gaze he looked round the little apartment. Several articles of women's dress lay upon the table; but Aleen, the dear object of his search, was gone.

"Curse the villains!" cried O'Regan, "they have carried them both off!" and without waiting for a word from his bewildered master, he darted down stairs and rapidly descended the rocks to the beach.

Completely staggered by this unexpected event, Sir Gerald, after searching the upper room, hastened after Dennis O'Regan. On reaching the beach, he found his brother in a state of excitement, and the two men left with the boat, one with a cut over his temple, and the other with a pistol ball in his shoulder.

"This comes of not keeping a good look-out," said Captain Fitzmaurice, in a vexed tone, to the wounded men. "Were you not already hurt, you would incur punishment. You allow yourselves to be surprised and overpowered by two men carrying two women in their arms, though both of you were well armed with pistols and cutlasses. This is disgraceful."

The men, who loved their commander well, felt his reproof much more than their hurts, and hung down their heads with shame and vexation.

"What, in heaven's name, is to be done?" asked Colonel Granville, in an agitated tone. Then, addressing the wounded sailors, he inquired if they knew the men by whom they had been assailed, and whether William O'Grady was one of them.

"I do not know who they were, sir," was the reply. "One was a foreigner—I am certain of that by his oaths; the other was a rough brute, and had a woman with him whom he called Brady. But if we had a boat, they could easily be caught. They can't pull that long-boat, sir, **above** a couple of miles an hour with two oars."

Though feeling keenly his brother's sad disappointment, Captain Fitzmaurice had no other consolation to offer than that Mr. Haultight would undoubtedly send another boat in the morning, finding they did not return. "Besides," he added, "ten chances to one they will see the long-boat pulling out from the island, as they must pass tolerably close to the brig, and a sharp look-out will be sure to be kept. I perceive, moreover, there is a breeze from the south-west rising, which will at once prevent the boat from gaining the land in that direction."

Colonel Granville was forced to exercise that most useful of virtues, patience, though suffering great anxiety. He was puzzled in conjecturing where the two men, agents, of course, of William O'Grady, could possibly think of conveying Aleen. The risk she incurred in an open boat also tormented his mind.

While the two brothers were conversing upon their want of forethought in leaving only two men to guard the boat, the sailors dispersed over the island to search for the caves where the smugglers must have been concealed. For a time they were baffled in finding the caverns, and only by mere chance one of them, in falling over a rock, discovered the narrow entrance.

On hearing this, Captain Fitzmaurice ordered a torch to be lighted, and then the whole party entered the large outward cavern. Here a large quantity of goods of all sorts, and of considerable value, was discovered. An immense stock of hollands and brandy was also stowed away in tiers.

"This is a seizure of some value," said the Captain to his brother; "and must be looked after."

Having examined both the outward and inward cavern, they returned to the tower, to wait for daylight, and endeavour to signalize the brig. In rummaging the tower, O'Regan found it was well stored with food, wine and spirits. Accustomed to attend to the Colonel's wants during his campaigns in Flanders, where his ingenuity often found his master a substantial repast when food was

scarce, Dennis insisted on placing before the brothers a most excellent supper.

As to the Colonel, his thoughts were too busy to allow him to feel inclined to eat ; but, to induce Cuthbert Fitzmaurice to sit down, he drank a little wine, and partook of O'Regan's repast.

The night passed in conversation ; Gerald briefly related the chief events of his life to his brother, who, thus acquainted with facts before unknown to him, became more deeply interested in the fate of Aleen.

Meanwhile, O'Regan took care of the sailors in the room below, and, before morning, was a prodigious favourite with them.

It was scarcely dawn, when the whole party in the tower were startled by the loud boom of a cannon from seaward.

"A gun from the brig!" exclaimed Captain Fitzmaurice, starting up ; while the Colonel, without a word, ran to the window facing the sea.

Another, and then another report followed.

"By Heavens, there is something going on outside!" ejaculated Sir Gerald to his brother, in great excitement. "I cannot see the brig—the light is yet weak."

But as the dawn increased in strength, objects some distance from the island were discerned ; and one of the sailors, with a shout, declared he caught a glimpse of the brig's gig, pulled by four men, turning the angle of the outward island. The whole party then proceeded to the beach. A very few minutes after, the gig entered the little bay, with a midshipman sitting in the stern sheets at the helm.

As soon as her keel grated on the sand, Captain Fitzmaurice demanded of the youth what was the meaning of the firing, and whether they had seen the long-boat.

The mid answered by saying that Lieutenant Haultight had discovered the long-boat, almost before the dawn. The men who rowed her were forced to pass close to the brig ; for outside the wind was fresh to the westward, and

the boat pulled heavily under two oars. Having made her out with his glass, he suspected something wrong, and despatched the mid to the island with the gig, while the brig was got under weigh to pursue the boat.

"Good God! he did not surely fire at the boat?" exclaimed Colonel Granville, with a distracted air.

"I don't think that, sir," replied the midshipman; "but we cannot say why the gun was fired, as we were groping our way between the Islands at the time; and a small range of high rocks shut the brig out from our view."

"With your leave, Cuthbert, I will take the gig," said Colonel Granville, "and pursue the boat. With six oars, and only two of us in the stern, she will row fast."

"Do so, Gerald. I know your anxiety of mind must be great. I will signalize the brig from the tower; there's a whale boat on board still."

Taking his brother's cutlass and a brace of pistols, and followed by O'Regan, who provided himself with weapons, Gerald seated himself in the gig, which, impelled by six able-bodied seamen, flew over the still water.

"Now my lads," said the Colonel, "capture the long boat, and you shall have five hundred pounds between you."

A cheer, echoed from the high land, burst from the excited sailors, as the ash oars bent to their vigorous exertions.

"Be the immortal powers!" exclaimed O'Regan, looking at the priming of the pistols, "the boat flies. Only give me one pop at that rascal Phalim O'Toole, as he wanted to be called, and he'll scarcely eat his breakfast after it. It's him, and no other, and that jade Brady."

"He'll be wanted, Dennis," said the Colonel; "therefore, do not throw away powder upon him. Let the pistols alone; we shall scarcely want to use them with only two men to contend with, even should we be so fortunate as to overtake them."

They soon emerged into open water after passing Hare Island. The dawn was clear and bright, with a smart breeze from the westward. Having passed the Island, they perceived the brig; when one of the men standing up, in the excitement of the moment, cried out—

“By Jabers, the brig’s aground! she has her sails clewed up. She’s on the bank off Long Island. Hurrah!” he added, “there’s the long boat pulling heavily against this breeze for Blackcastle Bay. Hurrah!”

The man was right; the brig was fast upon a bank; but, fortunately, it was on the last hour of ebb tide; and, right ahead of the brig, was the long boat endeavouring to pull in for the land against the breeze which blew partly from the shore. The water was tolerably smooth; for the westerly winds blew off that part of the coast, consequently the brig ran no risk—an hour or two’s flood would float her.

The reason why the long boat, with our fair heroine and Jessy, had made so little progress during the night, was her getting aground on the shoal, in consequence of Mahony thinking to make a short cut between two small islands, and thus avoid a long pull against the wind with a heavy boat. Not being well acquainted with the locality, he became entangled amid the shoals, and a falling tide, and thus lost several hours; so that it was day-break before he contrived to get into open water.

In half-an-hour or less, Colonel Granville passed under the stern of the brig. The crew were busy getting an anchor out into deep water, to warp her off the moment the tide made. Mr. Haultight stood ready to speak to them; and, when within hail, Colonel Granville briefly told them of their mishap, and requested him to send a boat for his commander.

“Curse the rascals!” growled the lieutenant. “I would have had them long ere this, but the tail of this confounded bank picked me up. But you will catch them long before they can reach the land. They are

making for Black Castle Bay. I see a Dutch sloop coming out from Crookhaven, and steering for the boat—confederates, perhaps. Pull away, Colonel; no time to lose. Confound this bank; I would have sunk the rascals, only I saw women in the boat.”

Colonel Granville did not hear half the sentence, for the gig was pulling with might and main after the long boat. The island called Cape Clear lies a considerable distance from the main land. Between it and the large island called Eniskerkin, are three small ones, called The Calves. A succession of islands, such as Hare Island, Long Island, Clara and Lamb Island, block up the mouths of several extensive bays and creeks. Behind some of these islands, there is an excellent anchorage; the largest and best harbour in Crookhaven. From this latter creek, Colonel Granville could now perceive a large Dutch sloop, under full sail, steering towards the long boat.

This manœuvre of the Dutch galliot gave Colonel Granville considerable uneasiness. As he remembered that one of the men in the long boat was a foreigner, he at once conjectured he might be a Dutchman, and belong to the sloop they now beheld coming out of Crookhaven.

“Now, my men,” said our hero, “we must catch those fellows in the long-boat, before they can reach the sloop; or we shall have a trifle of odds against us.”

“Ay, ay, sir!” returned the men; bending to their oars till the spray flew from before the gig’s bow.

Leaving those in the gig in pursuit, we beg our readers to step on board the long-boat. The first words uttered by the two smugglers were curses at the slow way they made under two oars. The boat was capable of holding twenty men.

“Mine Gott!” muttered the Dutchman; “I would rather pull my vrow Katrine as dis d——boat. If it blow hard, der teufel, we shall never reach de creek.”

“Let us pull between The Chickens and the Hen,”

said Mahony, "instead of making round Eniskerkin. By so doing, we shall gain three miles to windward."

And they *did* pull; but in their attempt to get between the ranges of sunken rocks, called The Chickens, they stuck fast; and, finally, three hours of the night were spent in extricating themselves from a very embarrassing position. Thus, it was day-light when, rounding a small island, they perceived the brig on their larboard quarter, not more than two miles distant, lying to.

Though the brig was thus visible to them in the early morning light, they were themselves hidden by the mist that covered the surface of the water; but, with the dawn, a breeze arose, which dispersed the haze and revealed them to the sharp eyes of Mr. Haultight.

"Ten thousand teufels!" growled the Dutchman; "that cursed brig! We shall be seen!"

Aleen heard the words, and immediately surmised that the brig mentioned was a King's ship, and probably sent in pursuit of her abductors. Anxiously she turned her eyes in the direction where the vessel lay. The rising sun, at that moment, threw its early beams upon the white topsails of the brig, rendering her distinctly visible and apparently quite close. Her heart beat with renewed hope.

"For surely," thought she, "we shall be perceived."

She could not understand the mystery of this, her second, abduction. It could scarcely be by order of William O'Grady. It then suddenly struck her that these men were acting under a project of their own to obtain the money stipulated to be paid to their master.

Turning therefore towards Brady Mahony, Aleen said—

"If you are committing this outrage for the sake of gain, restore me to my family, or put me on board that brig, and you shall be paid your most exorbitant demands without inquiry. I pledge myself to that."

"Faix, miss, it's easy to pledge yourself, and I *dart* say you means what you say. But, as to putting you on

board that brig, it's more than our lives would be worth. She's a man-of-war. But you need not be afraid, for we won't injure you."

As Brady Mahony ceased speaking, the loud boom of a gun from the brig startled all in the boat. While the thunder of the report filled Aleen's mind with a feeling of hope, it had a very different effect upon the Dutch skipper, and Dennis Mahony. A succession of oaths and imprecations broke from the lips of the two men as they laboured hard at the oar, the long boat scarcely going ahead, though the tide of ebb had made some turn.

Again the cannon from the King's cruiser pealed over the deep. Her anchor was up, her topsails were filled, and the next moment she was bending under the pressure of the breeze, and steering direct after the boat.

A fierce laugh broke from the lips of Dennis Mahony, as he watched the brig.

"Never heed her, Tendersink," said he; "by jabbers, she will be a-ground in five minutes on the shoal."

Even while he spoke, the brig, evidently perceiving her danger, went in stays; but, before she was well up in the wind, she took the ground.

A burst of merriment from the two men announced their joy, while poor Aleen's heart sank at this fresh misfortune.

"Mine Gott!" exclaimed the Dutchman. "Look you! Here's von d——six-oared gig pulling out from the creek, and after us. Donner and blitzen, she'll catch us!" But the next moment he added, as he stood up and looked round, "Ha! ha! it's goot. Ten thousand teufels! Here's my old vrow Katarine standing out from Tre Castle Bay. All right now. Eight goot men on board; and a goot swivel if wanted."

"Then, by the powers! we'll dust their jackets for them," observed Dennis Mahony.

Still on came the gig dashing gallantly through the short seas, and casting the white spray over her sharp bows.

A cheer from the men on board the Dutch sloop as the heavy boat shot up along-side, showed they understood the state of affairs. As to Aleen, she almost despaired, as, with a heavy heart, she ascended the deck of the Dutchman with her eyes fixed in intense anxiety on the gig, which rapidly approached.

"Now, my hearties," said Tendersink, in his native tongue, "just bring the swivel aft, and let it bear upon this boat. Stand by, and give them a dose if they attempt to board us after I speak to them. That d——brig is aground for the next three hours or more; for the tides are cutting; so no fear of her."

Aleen stood holding by a back stay; and though she did not understand the words of the Dutch skipper, she understood very well the action of the men as they ran the swivel aft.

Though the sloop was at once put before the breeze, and the sheets slacked, the six-oared boat came up hand over hand. With a pistol in his hand, Tendersink stood upon the taffrail, and, as the boat came within hearing, he shouted out—

"Pull another stroke nearer, and by Gott! I riddle your jackets."

"Give way, my men," vociferated Sir Gerald Granville, as he stood up, cutlass in hand, while a wild shriek burst from the lips of Aleen as she recognised her lover, and then rushed to throw herself upon the man who was about to apply the match to the gun. But too late! A storm of grape tore up the water round the boat, shooting part of her gunnel, and wounding—happily slightly—two of the men. The next instant, the boat dashed along-side, and Colonel Granville sprang up over the bulwarks. As he did so, the Dutchman, with a curse, aimed his pistol at Gerald's head; but Aleen, with a cry of agony, dashed his arm upwards. The ball knocked the colonel's hat off, but the next instant a blow from his cutlass right on the head of the Dutch skipper stretched him senseless upon the deck.

"By jabbers, we have done it!" shouted Dennis Mahony, running forward to the men clustered in the bow, cowed by the supposed death of their skipper. "Now, lads, fight and be d—d, or you'll all swing for this on a tight rope."

But the men, as the four sailors, cutlass and pistol in hand, clambered over the sloop's bulwarks, threw down their arms and went below.

"So there you are, at last, Mister Phalim O'Toole," exclaimed Dennis O'Regan, with a mocking laugh, as he made a low bow to the enraged Mahony.

"Curse you! Take that, any how, though I swing for it," roared Mahony, as, with savage energy, he aimed his pistol at O'Regan's face.

But the weapon hung fire; and Dennis, dropping his cutlass, with a laugh of derision, and clenching his powerful hand, dealt Mahony a blow in the face that would have felled an ox, saying—

"There, my beauty, is a taste of a weapon that never missed fire."

This, Dennis Mahony at once acknowledged by measuring his length on the deck, bleeding profusely from mouth and nostril.

"Be gorra, that's better than splitting your skull with a cutlass," said O'Regan, eyeing the prostrate Mahony with evident satisfaction; "though, by the powers, I've closed your potato trap for a while."

But where was Aleen Atherstone during this time? Clapsed to the breast of her noble lover, and, tears of joy streaming from her eyes, she whispered in his ear—

"How thankful we ought to be, dear Gerald, to that Providence that rules all things! Even when giving way to despair, as I did, my deliverance was at hand. Ah, Gerald, my own Gerald, we never have sufficient reliance on Divine power."

Pressing her to his heart, with inexpressible rapture, he said—

"Dear one! we part no more."

Dennis O'Regan and two of the sailors had carried the bleeding Dutchman, and consigned him to the care of his crew and Mrs. Brady Mahony, who would not show her face on deck, but kept below uttering bitter execrations against Dennis O'Regan.

The sailors of the brig had by this time got the sloop on her right course, standing for the former vessel. The flood-tide was making, and the men were employed working her off the bank by anchors carried out from her.

"Well, sir," said Dennis, after congratulating Miss Atherstone in all the warmth and kindness of his heart—"well, sir, be me sowl, we have got Mr. Phalim O'Toole this time, and his better half too. Upon my conscience, she's growling down below like a Russian bear. She has two pets to nurse now."

"Is that Dutch rascal hurt?" enquired the Colonel.

"Hurt, is it, your honour?" replied Dennis, with a curious smile, and rubbing his head; "musha, unless his skull had the property of a smith's anvil, it would have a poor chance of standing a blow from your honour's hand. It served him right, though it's an ugly gap to have in one's head. But he won't die of it this time."

CHAPTER XXXVII

On the following day, about two hours after noon, a gentleman, followed by a single attendant, rode into the court-yard of an Inn, standing on the borders of Glengariff Lakes, where William O'Grady had passed the night so eventful and so full of peril to the heroine of our story.

Sir Gerald Granville, for he it was, and his constant

follower O'Regan, dismounted from their horses. The Colonel entered, and asked the landlord, who knew his guest, whether a person of the name of Williams was in the house.

"Yes, Sir Gerald," replied the host. "He arrived here late last night. He is above. Shall I announce you, sir?"

"No," said Sir Gerald. "Just show me the room."

In a few minutes, Sir Gerald stood at the door.

"That will do, Mr. Gilmer," said he, "I will announce myself."

The landlord bowed and retired.

The Colonel then opened the door and entered the room.

William O'Grady had seen his cousin ride into the court-yard of the inn. He knew him at once. His cheek flushed, and a feeling of shame and humiliation came over him.

As the Colonel entered the room, O'Grady stood with a cheek somewhat pale it is true, but with a steady unshrinking determination.

"William," said the Colonel, in his kind and mellow voice, and holding out his hand—"let the past be forgotten, as it is forgiven. I offer you my hand, with every desire in my heart to heal the wounds I must inflict; and to give you every reparation in my power in compensation for those rights you consider yourself deprived of."

Mastering the deep emotion that almost rendered him unable to speak, William O'Grady gazed upon the noble form and fine features of the Colonel, for a moment, in silence.

At length, in a tremulous voice, he said—

"I am not worthy, Sir Gerald Granville, to take the hand you so generously offer me. I have cruelly wronged you, and committed an unmanly and unpardonable outrage. To say that I now deeply repent the act, and that I came here with the determination to repair my error

and my crime, by unconditionally restoring to you one dearer to you than your own life, and to bid you and this country farewell for ever—is, after all, a poor atonement.”

“Then, William,” said the Colonel, in a tone of surprise, “you are ignorant of the events of the last few days.” And a painful feeling pervading his mind, caused his features to assume an extremely melancholy expression.

“What then has occurred?” asked William O’Grady, turning very pale, as he looked anxiously in his cousin’s face.

Sir Gerald Granville thought a moment, and then said—

“I see, William, that you are ignorant of the restoration of Miss Atherstone to her home, and the capture of The Warhawk.”

“Merciful heaven, my father!” exclaimed William O’Grady, in a tone of real anguish, and sinking down into a chair. “Say the worst at once, Gerald. He is taken; perhaps dead!”

“Such, William, I grieve to say, is the lamentable truth,” returned the Colonel, seating himself beside his cousin, and taking his hand and pressing it in an affectionate manner. “You suffer, William, at this intelligence,” continued he; “but it is better he should have died as he did, than fall into the hands of the Government.”

William O’Grady buried his face in his hands, and thus, for several moments, he remained. Though wild, lawless, and of passionate impulses, William O’Grady truly loved his father. He had steeped himself in crime for him, and perilled soul and body. And now, with all his errors on his head, the father to whom he had clung, had died a death of violence!

Looking up with a pale and haggard face, strangely changed in those brief moments of bitter grief and repentance, he laid his hand upon his cousin’s, saying—

"Gerald, you saved this worthless life when a boy. Oh, would to God you had let me perish then, innocent at least of crime!"

"Talk not of the past, William," interrupted Sir Gerald, "for it cannot be undone; and it is not good to lament over acts not to be recalled, when youth and strength and energy are still left us, by the mercy of Providence, to act and sin no more."

William O'Grady then listened calmly and resignedly to his cousin's account of the event of Aleen's release, the death of his father, and the capture of the Warhawk; and also the discovery of Cuthbert Fitzmaurice.

"As to the crew of the Warhawk," continued the Colonel, "as it would not be acting with justice to our country to let loose so many lawless men upon society, they have all been sent aboard King's ships. The Warhawk not being condemned as a smuggler, I have proposed to purchase her. Now listen to me calmly, William. For you to live in this country after what has passed, is impossible. Owing to a combination of circumstances, you have unquestionably been deprived of certain rights."

"Oh, for God's sake, Gerald," anxiously interrupted O'Grady, "name not again that wretched, miserable subject, the cause of all our crimes and sorrows."

"Nay, William, I will not pain you unnecessarily; but, in strict justice to the noble dead, let me say the little I intended. When our noble and generous uncle, Sir Hugh Granville, broke the entail, he was not aware that any other claimant than myself existed to the property. My brother Cuthbert was considered lost for ever, if not dead. When you were considered to be my lost brother, Sir Hugh made an addition to his will, of considerable importance. I need not say, William, why that will was destroyed. Now, knowing my uncle's sentiments, and that it was his earnest wish to provide for you, I simply wish to perform an act of justice, for you are the eldest nephew. I offer you, therefore, the sum you —"

"Never, Gerald, never!" passionately interrupted

William O'Grady, pressing his cousin's hand with much emotion. "What! would you have me accept wealth that was attempted to be extorted by a cruel, unmanly outrage? No, no, Gerald; that money would poison my very existence. I would fain try, in the new world, what my own endeavours, exerted in a right way, will do to establish an independence which I can enjoy without a feeling of shame attached to it. If, therefore, you will shield me, for a time, from the offended laws of my country, I shall be able, very shortly, to leave this land for ever. I have won the affection of a humble, but good and virtuous girl. I have promised to marry her and sail with her and her family for America. Now the wish of her heart is, that you and your brother would witness this marriage; and she trusts in God that my future career may atone for the errors of the past."

That night, the cousins sat to a late hour, conversing earnestly but calmly; till, finally, the Colonel gained O'Grady's consent to let him manage all matters relative to his departure for America, and his marriage with the young woman to whom he was attached, who was named Grace Comerford.

The following day, the cousins embraced most affectionately. The Colonel mounted his horse to return to Atherstone Hall, while William O'Grady set out for Mr. Comerford's, to remain quiet till he heard from Gerald.

A few words are necessary here to elucidate the scene just described.

After releasing Aleen from the hands of the Dutch skipper, Tendersink, the Colonel took his recovered treasure on board the brig, which, by that time, had warped off the bank, and Mr. Haultight, who, while aground, suffered the most intense anxiety, received Sir Gerald Granville and Miss Atherstone with unmingled delight; for, having seen the boat with the female reach the side of the Dutch sloop, he got alarmed, thinking the gig would be unable to come up with her.

The boat was then sent for his commander, and, before

two hours had expired, the brig was under weigh for Kenmare, Captain Fitzmaurice having put twenty men and an officer on board the Dutch sloop to take care of her and the stores in the cave till he could send one of the cutters round to secure them.

To describe the rapture of Miss Atherstone, when, on the following day, she received her happy daughter in her arms, is beyond our power. The whole country around seemed equally to rejoice — congratulations poured in from all sides. Bonfires were lighted by the tenantry all round the hall; and feasting and revelry occupied all parties for the next twenty-four hours.

The Colonel now returned to Atherstone Hall, where he found his brother Cuthbert, with whom he agreed that it would be better, before the commencement of any proceedings to prove Cuthbert's birth and claims to the Fitzmaurice property, to witness William O'Grady's marriage with Grace Comerford, and see the couple depart for America.

With a little management, and exerting some interest, Colonel Granville contrived to purchase the Warhawk, and at once had her re-fitted and rigged as a schooner, and then stored with all necessaries for a voyage to New York. There was no difficulty in finding ten smart hands to sail in her; and when everything was ready, she sailed for the Bay of Kilbonas, a lonely but beautiful cove to the eastward of the Mizen Head.

CONCLUSION.

It was on the last day of October, and a fair and beautiful day it was for the season of the year, that a remarkably beautiful schooner of 180 tons, might be seen riding at

lost his senses, and only recovered them on the day he changed her name of Silvertongue into that of Briefless.

Sir Gerald Granville found no difficulty, backed by the great interest he could command, in reinstating his brother Cuthbert in the forfeited estates of the Fitzmaurices, the attainder being reversed in his favour. As to his birth, they found no difficulty in clearly proving that, before a competent court.

Dennis Mahony and his wife, on a promise of a pardon, and a sum sufficient to carry them to a British colony, came forward and greatly helped to establish the important point.

Through the interest of the two brothers, Lieutenant Haultight was made a Captain, and took the command of the brig that captured the Warhawk.

Cuthbert Fitzmaurice did not quit the service; he highly distinguished himself during the war, and rose to the rank of Admiral. But, long before that period, he married a lady of great beauty and rank, and, what was far better, singularly amiable and domesticated.

Some months after Aleen's marriage, she received a long letter from her uncle, Ulick O'Connor, as also did Mrs. Atherstone. Both these epistles were written in kind and affectionate terms. O'Connor stated that he had had a marvellous escape after being taken in the Salisbury, and that he had succeeded in getting safely to France. He declared that the whole expedition was miserably mismanaged. But whatever might be his own political disappointments and suffering, he rejoiced in Aleen's happiness, and hoped yet to see her in his native land; for he still looked forward to the restoration of Charles Edward to the throne of his ancestors.

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